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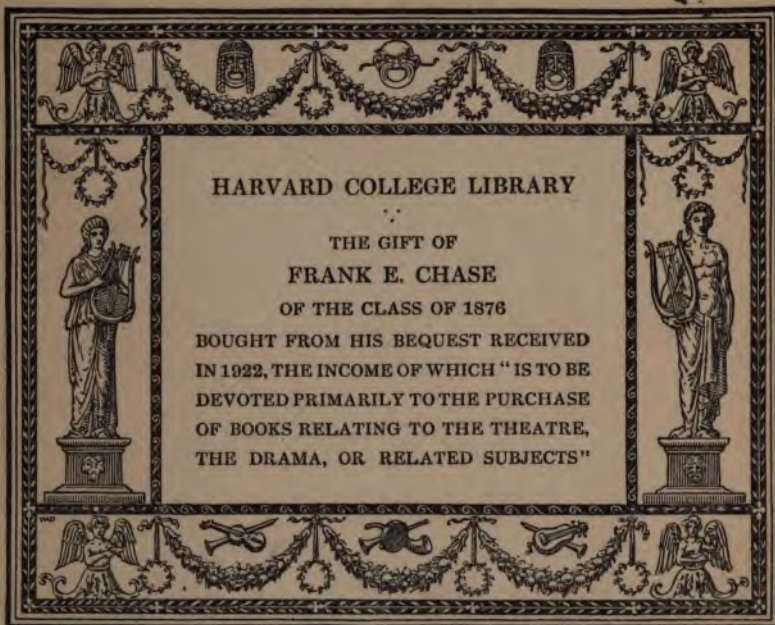
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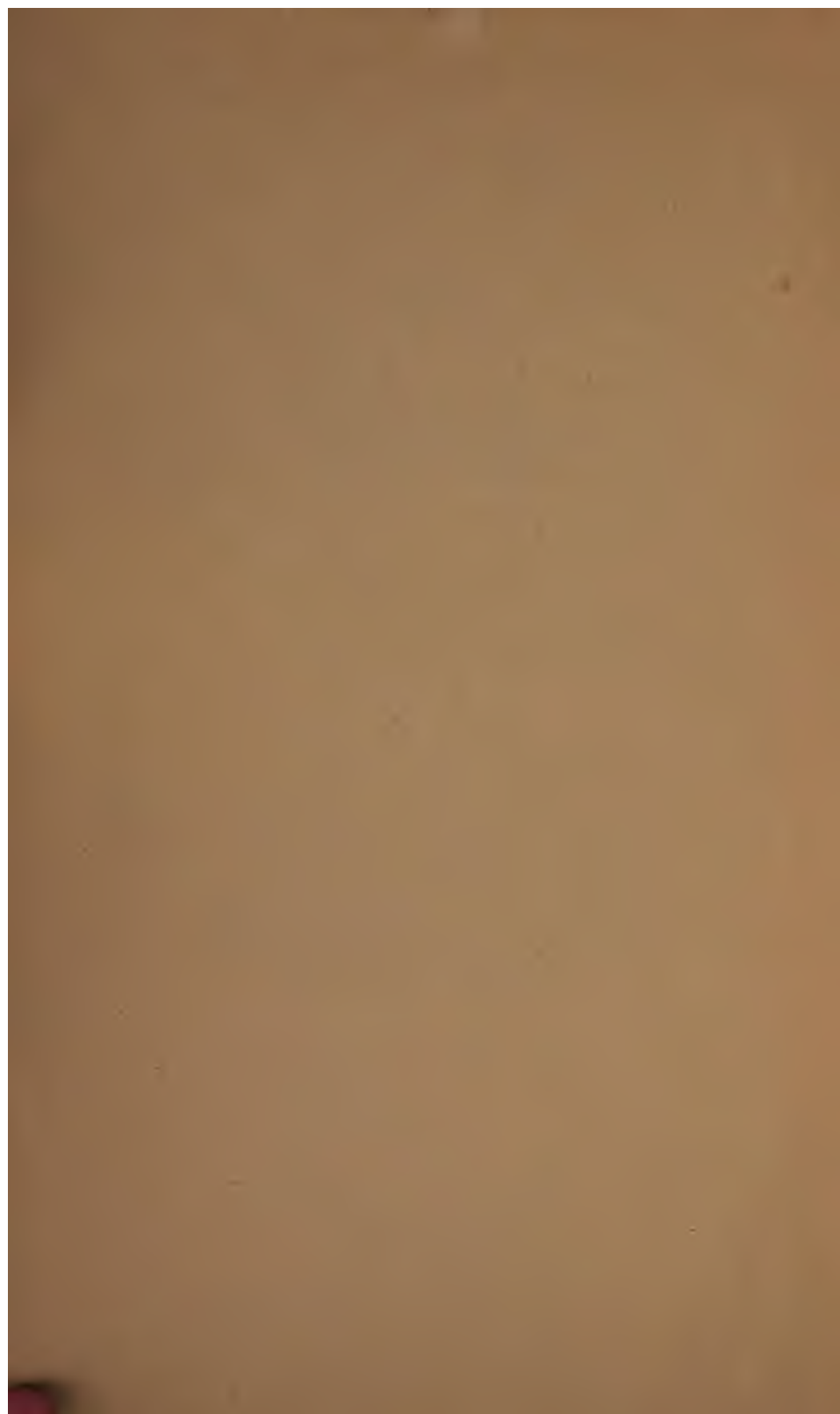
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PORTRAIT OF TARLTON,

Reduced by Mr. Shaw from an original drawing in the British Museum.

TARLTON'S JESTS,
AND
NEWS OUT OF PURGATORY:

WITH NOTES,

AND

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF TARLTON,

BY

JAMES ORCHARD HALLIWELL, ESQ., F.R.S.,

HON. M.R.I.A., HON. M.R.S.L., F.S.A., &c.

O honour far beyond a brazen shrine,
To sit with TARLTON on an ale-post's sign!

HALL'S *Satires*, vi., 1.



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INTRODUCTION.

The fleeting fame of men whose reputation has depended on arts that exclusively demand the exercise of the physical energies may be illustrated in the life of almost every actor, who was not likewise eminent as a dramatist. Burbage, the Kemble of Shakespeare's day, whose admirable personification of Richard the Third had so identified him with that character, that years afterwards the host at Leicester, as related by Bishop Corbet, confused the two—in how few does his memory remain! Tarlton, who is known to the bibliographer and collector by the two excessively rare tracts, now reprinted, neither of which, however, were written by him, may on that account have retained a greater degree of posthumous reputation ; but that he deserves more may be concluded from the opinion of Gifford,¹ that “he was, perhaps, the most popular comic performer that ever trod the stage, and his memory was cherished with fond delight by the vulgar, to the period of the revolution.” Gifford is supported in this by nearly hundreds of contemporary witnesses, who agree in asserting that

¹ Works of Ben Jonson, 1816, vol. iv., p. 364.

his comic powers were unrivalled, and in their estimation almost miraculous. He was the most celebrated clown of the school against which Shakespeare levelled his satire;¹ and he is also indirectly connected with our great dramatist, as having performed a part in the old play of the "Famous Victories." There are, moreover, few names in the whole circle of Elizabethan literature so frequently alluded to as that of Richard Tarlton: it will be familiar to all who have studied the progress of the drama during that period; and it is believed that a brief record of his merry sayings and doings will be generally acceptable to the members of the Shakespeare Society, highly illustrative as they are of the manners, or rather, perhaps, of the deficiency of them, at the court of Queen Bess.

Tarlton,² according to Fuller, was born at Conover,³ in Shropshire, "where," says he, "still some of his name and relations remain." If the "Jests" may be believed, his father was at one time resident at Ilford.⁴ See the present volume, p. 40. The period of his birth is not mentioned, but he was an author as early as 1570, as will be noticed hereafter. His mother's name was Kate,

¹ Hamlet, act iii., sc. 2.

² The name is not usual, but is found in the time of Henry VI. See Proceedings in Chancery, p. xxxv.

³ The registers do not begin till 1578, and none of those now preserved contain any notice of the family. Fuller erroneously gives Tarlton's Christian name *Thomas*. See also MS. Addit. 5749, f. 10.

⁴ The registers do not enable us to verify this circumstance. Some pedigrees of a family of the same name, resident in this part of England, kindly shown me by Sir Charles Young, do not commence early enough to clear up the point.

and a widow in 1588, as appears from his will. We have not succeeded in tracing any further information concerning his ancestors, but Fuller has preserved a very curious tradition respecting him, while he was yet resident at Condoover. "Here," says this pleasant gossiping old writer, "he was in the field keeping his father's swine, when a servant of Robert, Earl of Leicester, passing this way to his Lord's lands in his Barony of Denbighe, was so highly pleased with his *happy unhappy* answers, that he brought him to court, where he became the most famous jester to Queen Elizabeth."¹ It may, therefore, be reasonably concluded that his parents did not hold a very high position in society. His education appears to have been extremely limited, and we are distinctly told, by a writer who must have had good opportunities of ascertaining the fact, that "he was only superficially seen in learning, having no more but a bare insight into the Latin tongue."²

A play called "The Pleasant and Stately Morall of the Three Lordes and Three Ladies of London," 4to. Lond., 1590,³ gives a brief account of Tarlton's early life. The author tells us, through one of his characters, that Tarlton was "a prentice in his youth of this honorable city, God be with him!" We are afterwards informed that he was a water-bearer in his early life, an

¹ Fuller's Worthies, ed. 1811, ii., 311.

² See the present volume, p. 53, and also an anecdote at p. 11.

³ Entered by Richard Jones on the Stationers' Registers the 31st July, 1590:—"Entred for his copie under thandes of Doctor Wood and the wardens, a comodie of the pleasant and statelic morrall of the Three Lordes of London."

assertion that is more likely to be of authority than the tradition related by Fuller. If his "Jests" are worthy of credit, he and his wife Kate at one time kept a tavern in Gracechurch Street, and, at another period, an ordinary in Paternoster Row.¹ It is almost certain that he was a tavern-keeper at one period of his life, for in William Percy's play of "Cuck-Queanes and Cuckolds Errants," he is represented as "quondam controller and induperator" of an inn at Colchester.² His various allusions to his having been so employed must have some foundation in fact.

The earliest notice of Tarlton, yet discovered, bears date in 1570, when his name occurs as the author of a ballad on great floods which then happened in Bedfordshire. This curious ballad has been printed by Mr. Collier, and will be found in the Appendix. His name does not appear in the patent to players granted in 1574, although that patent was procured through the influence of the Earl of Leicester, who, from Fuller's account, would have been likely to have appreciated Tarlton's talents, had he then attained any eminence in that way.³ He must, however, have been eminent in his profession within a short time after this date, for early in 1583⁴

¹ It has been conjectured that this was on the site of what is now Dolly's Chop-House. See the Gentleman's Magazine for 1780, p. 325.

² See the Roxburge Club edition of this play, 4to. Lond., 1824.

³ See Collier's Annals of the Stage, i., 210.

⁴ "Comedians and stage-players of former time were very poore and ignorant in respect of these of this time, but being nowe growne very skilfull and exquisite actors for all matters, they were entertained into the service of divers great Lords, out of which companies there were xii. of

we find him chosen one of the Queen's players, and a groom of the chamber, which office he held till his death in 1588.¹

In addition to his other accomplishments, Tarlton was well skilled in fencing. In the British Museum is preserved a fragment of a register belonging to a School of Defence, a species of college fashionable and important in Tarlton's time. Tarlton was admitted a Master of Fence, the highest degree, in 1587. The reader will recollect that Master Slender thought it an honour to play with a Master of Fence, "three veneys for a dish of stewed prunes." The following extracts from this MS.² contain notices of the subject of our memoir :—

Mr. Tarlton, ordenary grome off her majestes chamber, was allowed a mr, the xxijth of Octobere, under Henrye Nayllore, in 1587.

James Cranydge playd his masters prize the 21 of Nowember, 1587, at the Bellsavage, without Ludgate, at iiij. sondry kindes of weapons, that is to say, the longsword, the backsword, the sword and dagger, and the

the best chosen, and at the request of Sir Francis Walsingham, they were sworn the Queenes servants, and were allowed wages and liveries as groomes of the chamber: aud untill this yeere, 1583, the Queene hadde no players. Amongst these xii. players were two rare men, viz., Thomas Wilson for a quicke delicate refined extemporall witte, and Richard Tarleton for a wondrous plentiful pleasant extemporall wit, hee was the wonder of his time. He lyeth buryed in Shore-ditch Church."—*Stow's Annales*, ed. 1615, p. 697.

¹ It is stated by some that he was discharged from this office for some scurrilous reflections on Leicester and Raleigh, but see his will. This was not a patent office, which may be the reason of my not having succeeded in discovering any facts relative to him in the Record Offices.

² This MS. also notices a Robert Greene, but I rather doubt whether he was the poet of that name.

rapier and dagger. Ther playd with him 9 masters, that is to say, Andreue Collowe at ij. weapons, the longesword, and the backsword, and no more: and the other viij. m^r at all the weapons, that is to say, John Daniell, Wallentine Longe, Richard Flecher, Robard Blisse, W^m Mathewes, John Goodwyne, Gregory Grene, Henry Naylor, in the presents of ther bretheren, that is, M^r. Joyner, John Evans, Pawle Weran, and Richard Tarlton, and so the sayd James Cranydge was allowed a m^r under Richard Tarleton, m^r of the noble syence of deffence, &c.

John Mathewes playd his masters prise the 31 daye of Januarie, 1588, at the Bell Savage, without Ludgate, at iiiij. sondry kinde of weapons, that is to saye, the longesworde, the backesworde, the sworde and dagger, and the rapier and dagger. There played with him vii., that is to saye, James Cranydge, John Dawell, Wallentine Longe, Richarde Flecher, Robart Blisse, John Goodwyne, and Gregorye Grene, and in the presents of the reste of the masteres, that is, William Joyner, his master, Mather Rycharde Petter, William Mathewes, Powlle Weran, and Rycharde Tarlton, and so the sayde John Mathewes was allowed a master under Williame Joyner, master of the noble syenes of deffence. 1588.—*MS. Sloane*, 2530, f. 6-7.

It is to be feared that Tarlton led a dissipated life, and Gifford, who gives no credit to the songs which tell of his recantation and repentance, believes that he died a profligate. That he was poor is also asserted by more than one authority,¹ and his will indicates no appearance of real property. In person he was plain — a flat nose and a disposition to squint do not generally contribute to a handsome countenance; but, as Bucke tells us, “the finenes was *within*.”

The year 1588 witnessed the Spanish Armada, and the death of Tarlton; and the latter circumstance long continued to be remembered by the other. Tarlton is

¹ See Bucke's play, before quoted: — “But soft, thy name is wealth; I think in earnest he was litle acquainted with thee.”

said by W. Percy and others to have died the year of "the great Armada." In the burial register of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, for that year, occurs the following entry:—

**Richard Tarleton was buried the third of
September.**

It also appears from the same register that his residence was in "Haliwel Stret," so called from a famous well in the neighbourhood, but which is now generally known as High Street, Shoreditch.¹

Tarlton probably died of the plague, for he made his will, expired, and was buried the very same day; viz., Sept. 3rd, 1588.² His will is preserved in the registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and furnishes several interesting biographical facts. The following is a copy of it:—

To all Christien people to whom this present writinge shall comme, Richard Tarleton, one of the Gromes of the Quenes Majesties chamber, greetinge in our Lord everlastinge, knowe yee that I, the saide Richard, for the naturall love and fatherly affection that I doe beare unto my naturall³ and wel beloved sonne, Phillip Tarlton; and to the intent

¹ Burbage lived in the same street, as appears from the register, which I give verbatim, Malone having neglected to do so. "1618. Richard Burbadge player was buried the xvjth of Marche. Hallywell Street." His short epitaph, "Exit Burbage," is found in MS. Ashmole, 38, f. 190.

² This was not an unusual practice. Forman has the following entry in his diary for 1564:—"The first dai of Januarie, betwen twelve and on in the morn, my father died, and was buried the same daie, being New Yers daie."—MS. Ashmole, 208, f. 17.

³ This term does not here imply illegitimacy.

that he maye be the better mainteyned and brought upp in the feare of God and good letters, have given, graunted, confirmed, assigned, and sett over, and by thes presentes doe give, graunte, confirme, assigne, and sett over unto my said sonne, all suche cattells, chattells, plate, readie money, jewells, bondes obligatorie, and specialties whatsoever, that I now have, or am possessed of, or hereafter by any meanes shalbe, or in whose handes, custodie, or possession, the same now bee, or hereafter at any time shalbe, togeather withe all suche debtes and somes of money as now be, or any time hereafter shalbe due, or growinge due, or owinge unto me by any person or persons whatsoever, to have, howld, possesse, enjoye, perceyve, and receyve all my saide goodes, cattells, chattells, plate, ready money, jewells, bondes obligatorie, specialties, and debtes whatsoever, as aforesaide, unto my saide sonne, Phillipp Tarlton, and to the proper use and behoofe of the same Phillip his executors and assignes from the daye of the date hereof for ever, provided alwaies, and I doe hereby assigne, authorise, and appoynte, my most lovinge mother, Katharin Tarlton, widowe, and my very lovinge and trustie frendes Robert Adams, of the parische of St. Bridgett, *alias* Bride, in the suburbes of London, gent, and my fellow, William Johnson,¹ one also of the groomes of her majesties chamber, to have the use, government, custodie, and disposition of my said sonne, togeather with all my said goodes and cattells, to the entent and purpose aforesaide, untill he shall attaine and accomplishe his full age of twentie and one yeares, and theye and every of them that shall take upon them to deale in this behalfe, to yealde a just and trew accompte unto my said sonne. In Witnes of all and singuler the premisses, I, the said Richard Tarlton, have at then sealinge and deliverie hereof delivered one penny of lawfull money of England to the said Robert Adams, to the use of the saide Phillipp Tarlton, by waye of possession and seison of all my saide goodes and cattells, and hereunto have sett my hand and seale, withe the saide penny therin fixed, yeaven the third daye of September, a thousand five hundrethe eightie eighte, and in the thirtie yeare of the raigne of our soveraigne Lady Elizabeth, by the Grace of God, of England, Fraunce, and Ireland, Queene, defendor of the faiethe, &c. | — | Richard Tarlton | — | Signed sealed and delivered unto the above named Robert Adams, to the use of the said Phillipp Tarlton, in the presence of theis

¹ See Collier's Annals of the Stage, i., 210.

persons underwritten : | — | Stephen Wassell, his marke, Leonard Hodges, his marke | — | Charles Barnard | — | .

This will was proved on the sixth of the same month, three days afterwards. His frail wife Kate had probably died before this period, as we find no mention of her ; nor have we any knowledge of what became of his son Philip.

Tarlton's decease was a subject of much regret amongst his contemporaries, and many elegies were composed on the occasion. Camden has preserved the following :—

Hic situs est, cujus vox, vultus, actio possit
Ex Heraclito reddere Democritum.¹

Another has been frequently quoted, though not accurately, from " Wits Bedlam," 1617 :—

Here within this sullen earth
Lies Dick Tarlton, lord of mirth ;
Who in his grave, still laughing, gapes,
Syth all clownes since have beene his apes.
Earst he of clownes to learne still sought,
But now they learne of him they taught ;
By art far past the principall,
The counterfet is so worth all.

Scarcely more intelligible is the following Latin elegy by Fitzgeoffry, which is taken from his " Cenotaphia," 12mo, Oxon., 1601 :—

Richardo Tarltono.

Conspicienda amplo quoties daret ora Theatro
Tarltonus, lepidum non sine dente caput,

¹ Camden's Remaines, 1605, ii., 58. See the same, somewhat differently arranged, in Hackett's Select and Remarkable Epitaphs, 1757, ii., 59.

Spectantum horrido cælum intonat omne cachinno,
 Audiit et plausus aula suprema Jovis.
 Attoniti stupuere poli, stupuere polorum
 Indigenæ indigites cælicolumque cohors.
 Hausuri ergo tuos omnes, Tarlton, lepores,
 Elysia in terras valle redire parant.
 Id metuens, ne fors, deserta Jupiter aula,
 Bellerophonteos transigat usque dies,
 Ha! crudele tibi scelus imperat Atropos, et tu
 Tarltonum ad plures insidiosa rapis.
 Quod nisi tu peteres superos, Tarlton, petissent
 Te superi ad blandos confusa turba jocos.

To these must be added another of the same kind, which has been quoted to show that Tarlton was celebrated for his tragic as well as comic acting. I am inclined to think that Stradling merely means to express the great grief felt at Tarlton's death, for all other evidence is directly opposed to the idea that he was a tragic performer. But let the reader judge for himself from the following epigram, which is taken from Stradling's rare collection, 12mo., Lond., 1607:—

Rich. Tarltono, Comædorum principi. Epit.

Cujus (viator) sit sepulchrum hoc scire vis,
 Inscriptionem non habens?
 Asta, gradumque siste paulisper tuum:
 Incognitum nomen scies.
 Princeps Comædorum tulit quos Angliæ
 Tellus, in hoc busto cubat.
 Quo mortuo, spretæ silent Comædiæ,
 Tragædiæque turbidæ.
 Scenæ decus desiderant mutæ suum,
 Risusque abest Sardonius.

Hic Roscius Britannicus sepultus est,
 Quo notior nemo fuit.
 Abi, viator : Sin te adhuc nomen latet,
 Edicet hoc quivis puer.

Every one interested in the lighter literature of Elizabeth's time, which is so important in the illustration of the great poets of that period, will regret to find that, with two exceptions, all the ballads and minor pieces of Tarlton have perished, or at least have not yet been recovered. The following notices of some productions relating to or written by him are from the registers of the Stationers' Company, and are now for the first time printed in full :—

- x^o. Die Decembr. 1576.
 Richarde Jones.] Licenced unto him a newe booke in Eng- } iiij^d.
 lische verse intituled Tarltons Toyes. } and a
 } copi.
 v^{to}. die Februarii 1577-8.
 H^v Bynneman.] Lycenced unto him Tarltons Tragicall Trea- } iiij^d.
 tises, conteyninge sundrie discourses and pretie conceiptes } and a
 bothe in prose and verse. } copi.
 7 Feb. 1578-9.
 John Aldee.] Lycenced unto him under thand of M^r. Byshop, } iiij^d.
 Tarltons devise upon this unlooked for great snowe. }
 }
 xxij. die Septembr. 1588.
 John Wolf.] Allowed unto him under thandes of M^r. Hart- }
 well and M^r. Coldock a ballad intituled Tarltons Farewell. }
 }
 ij^{do}. die Augusti 1589.
 Henrie Kyrkham.] Licenced unto him under thandes of M^r. }
 Hartwell and M^r. Warden Newberie, A sorowfull newe son- }
 nette, intituled Tarltons Recantacion uppon this theame } vj^d.
 gyven him by a gent. at the Bel-savage without Ludgate } copy.
 (none or elles never) beinge the laste theame he songe. }

Die Jovis, xvj^{to}. die Octobr.

Rich : Jones.] Entred for his copie under thandes of the B. of }
 London and bothe the wardens, Tarltons repentance of his } vj^d.
 farewell to his frendes in his sicknes a little before his deathe. }

xx^o. die Augusti. 1590.

Henr. Carre.] Entred for his copie under thandes of Mr. Jud- }
 son and bothe the wardens, a pleasant dyttye dialogue wise } vj^d.
 betwene Tarltons ghost and Robyn Goodfellowe. }

Not one of these pieces has escaped the ravages of time. The first, Tarlton's Toyes, is thus alluded to by Nash, in his "Terrors of the Night," 4to., London, 1594, in the address to the reader:—

Martin Momus and splaic-footed Zoylus, that in the eight and sixt age of poetrie, and first yere of the reigne of *Tarltons toies*, kept such a foule stir in Poules Church-yard, are now revivd againe, and like wanton whelpes that have wormes in their tungs, slaver and betouse everie paper they meete withall.

But Tarlton was most celebrated for his extemporal rhyming and his jigs. It must be recollected that the clown was a much more important and privileged personage in his day than our own. He not only entered on the stage at stated intervals, but continually mixed with the company, and attempted to excite merriment by any species of buffoonery that occurred to him; and frequently entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with some of the audience.¹ To this absurd custom Hamlet alludes when he says, "And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too."

¹ See Malone's Shakespeare, ed. 1821, iii., 131, for several curious quotations on this subject.

Several specimens, probably genuine, are related in the following pages. Doggrel verse was generally the medium in which wit of this nature was expressed; sense and metre being generally neglected, if a jingling rhyme could be produced:—

“He fagotted his notions as they fell,
And if they rhym'd and rattled, all was well.”

Gabriel Harvey, speaking of Greene in 1592, mentions “his piperly extemporizing and *Tarletonizing*,” a curious instance of the popularity Tarlton must have obtained in that species of entertainment. Kemp succeeded Tarlton in the same kind of exhibition.

A jig was a ludicrous metrical composition, often in rhyme, which was sung by the clown, who likewise occasionally danced, and was always accompanied by a tabor and pipe. Tarlton was famous for the performance of his jigs, and the music to several are preserved in Dowland's musical collections in the University Library at Cambridge.¹ The words to one of them are still preserved, and are favourable to his talent. It was delivered by him at the Curtain Theatre, and contains a humorous and satirical attack upon the corporation of London as the persevering adversaries of theatrical performances. Mr. Collier possesses the very curious MS. in which this unique and precious document was copied about the middle of the seventeenth century; and to his liberality the members of the Shakespeare Society are indebted for its publication. It is as follows, and the reader will bear in mind that it was written before 1588:—

¹ See my Cambridge Manuscript Rarities, p. 8.

Tarlton's Jigge of a horse loade of Fooles.

What do you lacke? what do ye lacke?
 Ive a horse loade of fooles,
 Squeaking, gibbering of everie degree;
 Ime an excellent workeman,
 And these are my tooles:
 Is not this a fine merie familie?

Here is one of the familie,¹
 His name it is Dicke,
 Squeaking, &c.
 Hes his fathers none sonne,
 For he has the tricke:
 He comes of a fine merie familie.

He is truely a player foole,
 And soe you may him call,
 Squeaking, &c.
 You may see his goodly counterfeit
 Hung up on everie wall.

You never can misse the likenesse,
 For everie bodie knowes,
 Squeaking, &c.
 His fathers lovelie visnomie,
 His two eyes and flat nose.

He has alsoe, I warraund ye,
 His fathers wondrous witt,
 Squeaking, &c.
 Soe no more at the present time
 There needes be said of it.
 He comes of a rare wittie familie.

¹ Mr. Collier, who has quoted part of this jig in his "New Facts regarding the Life of Shakespeare," 8vo., London, 1835, p. 18-20, is of opinion that Tarlton here introduces a variety of fools to the audience, probably puppets suitably dressed. His introducing himself as one of the fools was probably highly relished by the audience.

And here you may see I have
 Even such an other,
 Squeaking, &c.
 The player fooles deare darling pigsnie
 He calles himselfe his brother,
 Come of the verie same familie.

This foole he is a Puritane,
 Goose son¹ we call him right,
 Squeaking, &c.
 A most notorious piedbalde foole,
 For sure a hippocrite;
 Of a verie numerous familie.

Of the familie of Love, like a player, he is not,
 Squeaking, &c.
 The thing that he seemes comonlie,
 But is, God it wot,
 Of a verie catlike familie.

I durst not say all that he is,
 You may guesse it that can:
 Squeaking, &c.
 I call him that he calles him selfe,
 That is a Puritan,
 Of a verie truth telling familie.

This one that in my hand I holde,
 I call him a foole of State,
 Squeaking, &c.
 And being borne verie little,
 Would faine be verie great:
 Of a verie antient familie.

¹ A curious allusion to Gosson, whose "School of Abuse," 1579, has been reprinted by this Society.

You see in his apparrell
 He most tricksie¹ is and brave,
 Squeaking, &c.
 But truelie in his countenance
 Most marvellouslie grave :
 Of a most court loving familie.

Wise he is most certaine
 In striving soe to looke,
 Squeaking, &c.
 As though within his braine he had
 Some philosofer's booke,
 Of Solon's or Solomon's familie.

Could you turne him inside out,
 You would presentlie see,
 Squeaking, &c.
 He is a more true begotten foole
 Then ever I bee,
 And not of so merie a familie.

This one you perchance might know
 By his dresse and his shape,
 Squeaking, &c.
 Is a poett, or if he is not soe,
 He is a poett ape :
 They are of the same familie.

He has got of scollershippe
 The redd carrott nose,
 Squeaking, &c.
 With drinking sacke and canarie
 At the Hat or the Rose :
 Of a rare wine-bibing familie.

¹ Clever. See the Tempest, act v., sc. 1

Yet some times he must stint him selfe
 And live on a leeke,
 Squeaking, &c.

The while he writeth pastoralls
 For us players to speake:
 Of a right lying familie.

Or makes by the bushell madrigalls
 Or ballades for to sell,
 Squeaking, &c.

I, his father, can make them allmost
 O' the suddaine quite as well:
 Of a verie ballatting familie.

This now is wise doctor Dunse,
 A verie noted foole,
 Squeaking, &c.

Who thinkes you nothing can be done
 But by olde Galen his rule:
 Of a verie poysoning familie.

He killeth us all I weene
 With such skill and arte,
 Squeaking, &c.

He makes dying quite a pleasure:
 When death doe us departe.
 Of a wonderfull learned familie.

Yet is he no such foole Ime verie sure,
 As I will now you tell,
 Squeaking, &c.

If he makes you thinke you sicke,
 Whenas indeede you are well:
 Of a verie wilye familie.

If he maketh you paie money
 For making you ill,
 Squeaking, &c.

You are the greatest fooles of all,
 And say it I will :
 Of a most innocent familie.

This one, now, is a lover foole :
 Noe, it is not this; I lye.
 Yes it is, I sweare by Cupido :
 Hist, you may heare him sighe :
 Of a verie windie familie.

All the livelong wearie daie
 With his armes acrossse,
 Squeaking, &c.
 Singing this dittie to his lute,
 O, my lucke is losse !
 Of a most melancholicke familie.

He is of all the rest the most
 Pitiefull foole in deede,
 Squeaking, &c.
 God helpe him, for his frendes sake,
 In his sute to speede :
 And for the sake of his familie.

God bye, God bye, with your ragged haire
 And your band untied,
 Squeaking, &c.
 Tis pittie, as you say your selfe,
 When borne you had not died ;
 But of a short livde familie.

This foole comes of the citizens.
 Nay, prethee, doe not frowne :
 I knowe him as well as you
 By his liverie gowne :
 Of a rare horne mad familie.

He is a foole by prenticeship
And servitude, he sayes,
And hates all kindes of wisdomes,
But most of all in playes:
Of a verie obstinate familie.

You have him in his liverie gowne,
But presently he can,
Qualifie for a mule or a mare,
Or for an Alderman;
With a golde chaine in his familie.

Being borne and bred for a foole,
Why should he be wise?
It would make him not fitt to sitt
With his bretheren of Ass-ize:
Of a verie long earde familie.

Here you see a country foole
Just come to towne,
Squeaking, &c.
To be made a gentleman
From a rusticke clowne;
Of a Somersetshire familie.

If he comes but to the Curtaine,
I promise, he shall see
Squeaking, &c.
A gentleman made a verie clowne,
And that is by mee:
Of a most mottley familie.

He must change his russetting
For satin and silke,
And he must weare no linnen shirt
That is not white as milke,
To come of a well borne familie.

This advice I profer him :
 To be a gentleman,
 Or to seeme soe to judicious eyes,
 Speake as foolishe as he can :
 It longeth to the familie.

I have many other fooles here,
 And all of sundry sort,
 Lawyer fooles, Sir John fooles,
 Fooles of the Court :
 A large and loving familie.

But *noverint universi*,
 Good neighbours, I have done :
 You have seene my horse loade of fooles,
 And I must now be gone
 With my most merie familie.

But sitt you merrie, gentlemen,
 For wise men doe say,
 Squeaking, &c.
 A fooles bolt is soome shott : ist so ?
 I bid you all good day.
 Hey ree, horse, with my familie.

The modern reader will be rather at a loss to discover the merit of many of Tarlton's "Jests;" but he must recollect that none of the recorded witticisms of his times are very brilliant. Tarlton's face seems to have set people in a roar, without any other assistance. Nash says, "the people began exceedingly to laugh when Tarlton first peept out his head." Peacham, in his "Thalia's Banquet," 12mo., London, 1620, has the following epigram:—

To Sir Ninian Ouzell. (Ep. 94.)
 As Tarlton when his head was onely seene,
 The Tire-house doore and Tapistrie betweene,

Set all the multitude in such a laughter,
 They could not hold for scarce an hour after.
 So, sir, I set you, as I promis'd, forth,
 That all the world may wonder at your worth.

Fuller also tells us :—

Our Tarlton was master of his faculty. When Queen Elizabeth was serious, I dare not say sullen, and out of good humour, he could *un-dumpish* her at his pleasure. Her highest favorites would, in some cases, go to Tarlton before they would go to the Queen, and he was their usher to prepare their advantageous access unto her. In a word, he told the Queen more of her faults than most of her chaplains, and cured her melancholy better than all of her physicians.

Much of his merriment lay in his very looks and actions, according to the Epitaph written upon him :—

Hic situs est cujus poterat vox, actio, vultus,
 Ex Heraclito reddere Democritum.

Indeed, the self-same words, spoken by another, would hardly move a merry man to smile; which, uttered by him, would force a sad soul to laughter.—*Fuller's Worthies*, ii., 312.

Sir Richard Baker¹ mentions Tarlton, “who, for the part called the clown’s part, never had his match, never will have.” He was often favourably noticed in com-

¹ After such men, it might be thought ridiculous to speak of Stage Players; but seeing excellency in the meanest things deserves remembering, and Roscius the Comedian is recorded in History with such commendation, it may be allowed us to do the like with some of our Nation. Richard Bourbridge, and Edward Allen, two such Actors as no age must ever look to see the like: and, to make their Comedies compleat, Richard Tarleton, who for the Part called the Clowns part, never had his match, never will have. For Writers of Playes, and such as had been Players themselves, William Shakespeare, and Benjamin Johnson, have specially left their names recommended to posterity.—*Chronicle*, fol., London, 1653, p. 581.

parison with his successors.¹ Yet, with all his mirthful powers, like many other comedians, he was not always in the same cheerful mood. Sir Roger Williams, in "A briefe discourse of Warre," 4to., London, 1590, two editions of which were published the same year, in his address to the reader, says:—

But whether it be for policie or armes, it is an error to thinke men without triall worthie to bee compared unto the others tried, in what place soever great or smal. Divers play Alexander on the stages, but fewe or none in the field. Our pleasant Tarleton would counterfeite many artes, *but he was no bodie out of his mirths.*

The great popularity which Tarlton possessed may be readily seen from the numerous allusions to him in almost all writers of the time;² and few actors have been honoured with so many practical tokens of esteem. His portrait graced the alehouse;³ game-cocks were named after him;⁴ and, a century after his death, his effigy

¹ Let him try it when he will, and come himself upon the Stage, with all the scurrility of the Wife of Bath, with all the ribaldry of Poggius, or Boccace, yet I dare affirm he shall never give that contentment to beholders as honest Tarlton did, though he said never a word.—*Baker's Theatrum Redivivum*, 1662, p. 34.

² It would answer no useful purpose to give many more instances, as they afford no new facts. The following references may be added: M. Mar Prelate's Epistle, ed. 1842, p. 25, 72; Brome's *Antipodes*, 4to., Lond., 1640; Nash's *Pierce Penilesse*, ed. Collier, pp. 44 and 63; Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, p. 43; Collier's *Memoirs of Alleyn*, pp. 6, 13, 14, 60; Decker's *Guls Horne-booke*, 1609, p. 3; &c.

³ See a passage from Bishop Hall, quoted on the title-page of the present volume, and a marginal note in Stow's *Annales*, ed. 1615. p. 697: "Tarelton so beloved that men use his picture for their signes."

⁴ See the *British Bibliographer*, iv., 320, and Collier's *Bridgewater Catalogue*, p. 335.

adorned the jakes!¹ According to Ellis, "his portrait, with tabor and pipe, still serves as a sign to an alehouse in the Borough."²

A common nursery song, which probably alludes to some historical event, originated with Tarlton, who perhaps first gave it out at the theatre. It is called "Old Tarlton's Song" in a tract entitled "Pigges Corantoe, or Newes from the North," 4to. Lond., 1642, p. 3:—

The King of France, with forty thousand men,
Went up a hill, and so came downe agen.

Bohun relates the following very curious anecdote of Tarlton and Queen Elizabeth. It has already been noticed by Mr. D'Israeli, in his "Amenities of Literature,"³ but seems scarcely deserving of credit:—

At supper she would divert herself with her friends and attendance; and if they made her no answer, she would put them upon mirth and pleasant discourse with great civility. She would then also admit Tarleton, a famous comedian, and a pleasant talker, and other such like men, to divert her with stories of the town, and the common jests, or accidents; but so that they kept within the bounds of modesty and chastity. In the winter-time, after supper, she would some time hear a song, or a lesson or two plaid upon the lute; but she would be much offended if there was any rudeness to any person, any reproach or licentious reflection used. Tarlton, who was then the best comedian in England, had made a pleasant play, and when it was acting before the Queen, he pointed at Sir Walter Rawleigh, and said, See the Knave commands the Queen; for which he was corrected by a frown from the Queen; yet he had the confidence to add that he was of too much and too intolerable a power; and going on with the same liberty, he reflected on the over-great power and riches of

¹ See Oldham's Remains, 8vo., Lond., 1710, p. 78.

² History of Shoreditch, 1798, p. 209.

³ Vol. iii., p. 152-3.

the Earl of Leicester, which was so universally applauded by all that were present, that she thought fit for the present to bear these reflections with a seeming unconcernedness. But yet she was so offended, that she forbad Tarleton, and all her jesters, from coming near her table, being inwardly displeas'd with this impudent and unreasonable liberty.—*Character of Queen Elizabeth*, 8vo., Lond., 1693, p. 352-353.

The following anecdotes and notices of Tarlton may with propriety find a place here :—

[From "Ulysses upon Ajax," 1596.]

I could use Tarlton's jest upon you touching the secret of barley, who, attending one day at a great dinner on Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor deceased, by chance, among other pretty jests, gave him unadvisedly the lie; for which the honourable person merrily reproving him, instead of submitting himself, he thus wittily justified:—My Lord, said he, is it not a custom when a prince hath spoken any thing note worthy to say he hath delivered it majestically? Again, when you that are *monsieurs*, my *lords*, *excellencies*, *altesses*, and such like speak any thing, say not the assistants straitways, he concluded honourably? Nay, in every estate, if either noble, right worshipful, worshipful, gentle, common, honest, dishonest, poor or rich, sick or whole, *et sic ad infinitum*, speak any thing, doth not the world conclude straight that they have spoken nobly, right worshipfully, worshipfully, gently, commonly, honestly, poorly, richly, sickly, wholly? Nought without a lie, my Lord, quoth Dick Tarlton, nought without a lie: he that therefore pays it with a frown or a stab, forgetteth himself.

[From MS. Harl. 5353, f. 12.]

Tarlton called Burley-house gate, in the Strand, towards the Savoy, the L. Treasurers almes gate, because it was seldome or never opened.

[From Taylor's "Wit and Mirth," in his Workes, fol. Lond. 1630, p. 191.]

Dicke Tarleton said that hee would compare Queene Elizabeth to nothing more fitly then to a sculler, for, said he, neither the Queene nor the sculler hath a fellow.

[From "A new discourse of a stale subject, called the Metamorphosis of Ajax," 1596.]

What should I speake of the great league betweene God and man, made in circumcision? impressing a painefull *stigma* or character in God's peculiar people, though nowe most happily taken away in the holy sacrament of baptisme. What the worde signified I have knowne reverent and learned men have bene ignorant, and we call it very well circumcision, and uncircumcision, though the Remists, of purpose belike to varie from Geneva, will needs bring in Prepuse, which worde was after admitted into the theater with great applause by the mouth of Mayster Tarlton, the excellent comedian, when many of the beholders, that were never circumcised, had as great cause as Tarlton to complaine of their Prepuse.

[From Vaughan's "Golden Fleece," 4to., Lond., 1626. This anecdote also occurs in MS. Sloane, 1489, f. 20.]

In the meane space, as long as like mules you claw one another, I assure your wise masterships that you shall but minister matter to Buffones of rederision, as some of your alliance sometimes felt from the mouth of Tarleton, who being upon the stage in a towne where he expected for civill attention to his Prologue, and seeing no end of their hissing, hee brake forth at last into this sarcasticall taunt:—

I liv'd not in the Golden Age,
When Jason wonne the fleece,
But now I am on Gotam's stage,
Where fooles do hisse like geese.

[From Peacham's "Worth of a Penny," 4to., Lond., 1647.]

He that wantith money is for the most part extreamly melancholique in every company, or alone by himselfe, especially if the weather be fowle, rainy, or cloudy: talke to him of what you will, he will hardly give you the hearing: ask him any questions, he answers you with mononsyllables, as Tarleton did one who out-eat him at an ordinarie, as Yes, No, That, Thankes, True, &c.

[From MS. Ashmole, 38, p. 187. This anecdote is also found in Hobson's Jests, 1607, there attributed to Hobson.]

Uppon ^{E. J.} *Medcalfe*.

I desire you all in the Lordes behalfe
To praye for the soule of poere John Calfe.

But Tarlton the jester noting the simplicities of the poet, writes this:—

O cruell death, more subtell then a fox,
 Thou mightst have lett hym live to have bine an oxe,
 For to have eaten both grass hay and corne,
 And like his sire to have wore a horne.

[From "The Abortive of an Idle Howre," 4to., 1620. I have not seen this work.]

Crosse me not Liza, nether be so perte,
 For if thou dost, I'll sit upon thy skerte.

Tarlton cutt off all his skirts, because none should sit upon them.

[From a letter of the Earl of Salisbury, dated 1607, printed in Lodge's "Illustrations," iii., 350.]

I shall feare that of a fine old courtier yow will, if yow tary long, prove, as Tarlton sayd, a plaine clowne.

[From "Ulysses upon Ajax," 1596.]

And so to Tarlton's Testament I commend you, a little more drinke, then a little more bread, and a few more clothes, and God be at your sport, Master Tarleton.

[From "The Discoverie of the Knights of the Poste," 4to., Lond., 1597.]

What say you, then, of him that bore the name of the olde player with the velvet cap: of the aged-Crane turnde backwarde, K. with the tun, and F. with the fire face, C.¹ the true cook-olde that sold away his wife for money, and afterwarde received her home againe: mary qd. G. as Tarleton saide of the tinker, that they have more craft in their budgets then crownes in their purses: notwithstanding of no reputacion, for they be but procurers of others to baile, and not baylers themselves.

¹ A curious allusion to William Cuckoe, the juggler who is introduced in Kind-Hart's Dreame.

[From "Chrestoleros. Seven bookes of Epigrames written by T. B.," 12mo., Lond., 1598, p. 155. The author of this book was Thomas Bastard. See Collier's Poetical Decameron, i, 199.]

Epigr. 39. De Richardo Tharltono.

Who taught me pleasant follies, can you tell?
 I was not taught and yet I did excell;
 Tis harde to learne without a president,
 Tis harder to make folly excellent;
 I sawe, yet had no light to guide mine eyes,
 I was extold for that which all despise.

[From Meres' "Palladis Tamia," 12mo., Lond., 1598, f. 285-6.]

As Antipater Sidonius was famous for extemporall verse in Greeke, and Ovid for his *Quicquid conabar dicere versus erat*: so was our Tarleton, of whome Doctour Case, that learned phisitian, thus speaketh in the seventh Booke, and seventeenth chapter of his Politikes; *Aristoteles suum Theodoretum laudavit quendam peritum Tragædiarum actorem; Cicero suum Roscium; nos Angli Tarletonum, in cujus voce et vultu omnes jocosæ affectus, in cujus cerebroso capite lepidae faciæ habitant.*

[From "Machivells Dogge," 1617.]

Tell captaine Tospot with his Tarleton's cut,
 His swaggering will not get him sixteene pence.

[From "A Whip for an Ape," 1589.]

Now Tarleton's dead, the consort lacks a vice,
 For knave and fool thou must bear pricke and price.

[From Nash's "Pierce Penillesse," 4to., Lond., 1592, Mr. Collier's edition, p. 36.]

Amongst other cholericke wise justices he was one that, having a play presented before him and his touneship by Tarlton and the rest of his fellowes, her Majesties servants, and they were new entring into their first merriment, as they call it, the people began exceedingly to laugh when Tarlton first peept out his head. Whereat the justice, not a little moved, and seeing with his beckes and nods hee could not make them

cease, he went with his staffe and beat them round about unmercifully on the bare pates, in that they, being but farmers and poore countrey hyndes, would presume to laugh at the Queenes men, and make no more account of her cloath in his presence.

[From "The Commendation of Cockes and Cock-fighting," 4to., Lond., 1607, a tract by George Wilson.]

Also no longer agoe than the 4 day of May, 1602, at a cocke-fighting in the cite of Norwich aforesayd, a cocke called Tarleton, who was so intitled, because he alwayes came to the fight like a drummer, making a thundering noyse with his winges, which cocke fought many batels with mighty and fierce adversaries.

[From "Greene's News from Heaven and Hell," 1593.]

The legat had no sooner made an end of these latter words, but in comes Dick Tarlton, apparrelled like a clowne, and singing this peece of an olde song:—

"If this be trewe, as true it is,
Ladie, ladie!
God send her life may mend the misse,
Most deere ladie."¹

According to Harvey,² Tarlton was the contriver and arranger of an extemporal play called "The Seven

¹ See a ballad in Mr. Collier's "Old Ballads," printed for the Percy Society, p. 26, in which a very similar stanza occurs.

² Fovre Letters, 4to., Lond., 1592, p. 29. "Not dunsicallly botched up, but right formally conveied, according to the stile and tenour of Tarletons president, his famous play of the Seaven Deadly sinnes;: which most dea[d]ly, but most lively playe, I might have scene in London: and was verie gently invited thereunto at Oxford by Tarleton himselfe, of whome I merrily demaunding which of the seaven was his owne deadlie sinne, he bluntly aunswered after this manner: By God, the sinne of other gentlemen, Lechery. Oh, but that M. Tarleton, is not your part upon the stage, you are too-blame, that dissemble with the world and have one part for your frends pleasure, an other for your owne. I am somewhat of Doctor Pernes religion, quoth he: and abruptlie tooke his leave."

“Deadly Sins,” the original plat of which is in the library of Dulwich College. Mr. Collier has thus fully described it in his *History of the Stage*, iii. 394 :—

It is a pasteboard of about fifteen inches long, by about nine inches broad, with a hole in the centre near the top, by which it was doubtless hung up on a nail or peg, in order that each actor engaged in the performance might have the opportunity of referring to it as the piece proceeded, and thus be able to ascertain his place and duty. It is divided into two columns; but it will be more convenient and quite as intelligible not to give it tabularly, as in the original, but following precisely the course of the story as detailed in the two columns, proceeding to the bottom of the first before we commence the second. It is in a clear Italian hand, not unlike that which G. Peele wrote in 1596. It is as follows :—

THE PLATT OF THE SECOUND PARTE OF THE SEVEN DEADLIE SINNS.

A tent being plast one the stage for Henry the Sixt. he in it Asleepe. to him the Leutenñt. A purcevaunt R. Cowley Jo Duke and i warder R. Pallant — to them Pride, Gluttony, Wrath and Covetousnes at one dore, at an other dore Envie Sloth and Lechery. The Three put back the foure and so exeunt.

Henry Awaking Enter A Keeper J Sincler. to him a servaunt T. Belt to him Lidgate and the Keeper. Exit then enter againe—Then Envy passeth over the stag—Lidgate speakes.

A sennit. Dumb Shew.

Enter King Gorboduk with 2 Counsailers. R. Burbadg Mr. Brian, Th. Goodale. The Queene with ferrex and Porrex and som attendaunts follow. Saunder. W Sly. Harry. J Duke. Kitt. Ro Pallant. J Holland. After Gorboduk hath Consulted with his Lords he brings his 2 sonns to severall seates. They enving on on other ferrex offers to take Porex his Corowne. he draws his weopon. The King Queen and Lords step between them. They Thrust Them away and menasing ech other exit. The Queene and Lords depart Hevillie. Lidgate speakes.

Enter Ferrex Crownd with Drum and Coulers and soldiers one way. Harry. Kitt. R Cowly John duke. to them At another dore Porrex

drum and Collors and soldiers. W Sly. R Pallant. John Sincler. J Holland.

Enter Queene with 2 Counsailors. Mr. Brian, Tho. Goodale. to them ferrex and Porrex severall waies with Drums and Powers. Gordoduk entreing in the midst between. Henry speaks.

Alarums with Excurtions. After Lidgate speakes.

Enter ferrex and Porrex severally, Gordoduke still following them. Lucius and Damasus. Mr. Bry. T. Good.

Enter ferrex at one dore. Porrex at an other. The fight. ferrex is slayne. To them Videna The Queene. to hir Damasus. to him Lucius.

Enter Porrex sad with Dordan his man. R. P. W Sly. to them the Queene and A Ladie. Nich Saunder. And Lords R. Cowly, Mr Brian. To them Lucius Running.

Henry and Lidgat speaks. Sloth passeth over.

Enter Giraldu Phronesius Aspatia Pompeia Rodope. R Cowly Tho Goodale R. Go. Ned. Nick.

Enter Sardinapalus Arbactus Nicanor and Captaines marching. Mr Phillips. Mr. Pope. R. Pa. Kitt. J Sincler. J Holland.

Enter a Captaine with Aspatia and the Ladies. Kitt.

Lidgat speake

Enter Nicanor with other Captaines R. Pall. J Sincler. Kitt. J Holland. R. Cowly. to them Arbactus Mr. Pope. to him will foole. J Duke. to him Rodopeie Ned. to her Sardanapalus Like a woman with Aspatia Rodope, Pompeia will foole. to them Arbactus and 3 musitions Mr Pope. J Sincler. Vincent. R Cowley. to them Nicanor and others R. P. Kitt.

Enter Sardanapa. with the Ladies. to them a Messenger Tho. Goodale. to him will foole Running. A Larum.

Enter Arbactus pursuing Sardanapalus and The Ladies fly. After enter Sarda. with as many Jewels robes and gold as he can cary.

Alarum

Enter Arbactus Nicanor and The other Captains in triumph. mr Pope. R. Pa. Kitt. J Holl. R. Cow. J. Sinc.

Henry speaks and Lidgate. Lechery passeth over the stag.

Enter Tereus Philomele Julio. R. Burbage. Ro. R. Pall. J Sink.

Enter Progne Itis and Lords. Saunder. Will. J Duke. W. Sly.
Hary.

Enter Philomele and Tereus. to them Julio.

Enter Progne Panthea, Itis and Lords. Saunder. T. Belt. Will.
w. Sly. Hary. Tho Goodale. to them Tereus with Lords R. Bur-
badge. J. Duk. R Cowly.

A Dumb Show. Lidgate speakes

Enter Progne with the Sampler. to her Tereus from Hunting with
his Lords. to them Philomele with Itis hed in a dish. Mercury Comes
and all vanish. to him 3 Lords. Th. Goodale. Hary. W. Sly.

Henry speaks. to him Lieutenant Pursevaunt and warders. R. Cowly.
J Duke. J Holland. Joh Sincler. to them Warwick. Mr Brian.

Lidgate speaks to the Audiens and so

Exitts.

FINIS.

It is to be observed that this is only the plat of the *second* part of the Seven Deadly Sins, and that the plat of the *first* part, which probably displayed the effects of Pride, Gluttony, Wrath and Covetousness, has been irretrievably lost. It relates to three distinct stories, illustrating the consequences of Envy, Sloth, and Lechery : first, that of Gorboduc and his sons Ferrex and Porrex, secondly, that of Sardanapalus, and thirdly, that of Tereus ; and the question arises, in what way Henry VI. and Lidgate were concerned in it ? Henry VI. is in his tent, and probably Lidgate is supposed to regulate the performance in his presence, and for his amusement. In the course of the piece, Henry and Lidgate twice talk together, and Lidgate seems to act as chorus, to explain the dumb shows, and to deliver the prologue and epilogue.

It is easy to follow the course of each story, merely by the explanations given in the "plat : " the tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex is well known, but no pieces of a similar kind have reached us, regarding the luxury of Sardanapalus, or the lechery of Tereus. Steevens, when adverting to these "plats," concludes that such plays once existed, and that parts of them

were used in this performance. This is at least doubtful, and if so, we must suppose that four other plays had been previously employed in the representation of the four other deadly sins, as displayed in the *first* part.

I apprehend that the greater portion of the dialogue, at least between the principal characters, was to a certain degree extemporaneous, and that this production, and the three others of a similar kind, were got up as experiments in the nature of the Italian *Commedie al improvviso*, in which the actors invented, or were supposed to invent, the dialogue for the occasion. In the production before us, it is evident that there must have been a good deal of pantomime, but it was clearly not at all without dialogue.

Several of the biographical facts mentioned in Tarlton's "Jests" are supported by other evidences,¹ and this affords strong ground for believing that the com-

¹ The most important facts in the "Jests" may be thus arranged:—
 1. He jested before Queen Elizabeth, p. 5, &c.; confirmed by Fuller, Heywood, and others.—2. He was a Protestant, pp. 6, 34, 37; confirmed by the anecdote in the "Metamorphosis of Ajax," quoted at p. xxxi.—
 3. He was skilled in fencing, p. 9; confirmed by MS. Sloane, 2530.—
 4. He was dissipated, pp. 9, 13, 32, 33, 36; confirmed by the entry on the Stationers' Registers of his "Repentance," and the note at p. xxxiv.—
 5. He kept a tavern in Gracechurch Street, pp. 15, 21.—6. His wife was a loose character, pp. 17, 19.—7. Tarlton and his wife kept an ordinary in Paternoster Row, pp. 21, 26.—8. He was chosen scavenger to the ward when he dwelt in Gracechurch Street, p. 21.—9. He was one of the Queen's players, pp. 13, 27, 29, 30, 33; confirmed by Stow.—10. He had a flat nose, p. 28; confirmed by the portraits of him still extant. To these perhaps may be added his aversion to cats, p. 39. It may be as well to observe that Mr. Daniel has a copy of "Tarlton's Jests," with MS. notes by Oldys, which may substantiate some of these particulars, but I have not had an opportunity of seeing it. Oldys, however, in his MS. notes to Langbaine, merely gives an anecdote from "Tarlton's Jests" in illustration of Armin's life.

piler of them was well acquainted with the leading points of his life. Of course it is a question how many of the jests themselves are authentic. The anecdote of Banks and Tarlton may be one of these, although the famous horse, in a passage quoted by Douce, is described in 1601 as a "middle-sized bay English gelding, *about* fourteen years old." I do not see that this statement affects the supposition that the horse may have been exhibited in 1588, or earlier. The animal seems to have obtained the greatest degree of popularity in 1595, when the two following entries occur on the books of the Stationers' Company:—

1595. 14 Nov.

Edw. White.] Entred for his copie under thandes of both the wardens, a ballad shewing the strange qualities of a yong nagg called Morocco.	}	vj ^d .
--	---	-------------------

1595. 17 December.

Cutbert Burby.] Entred for his copy under thandes of the wardens, Maroccus Extaticus, or Bankes bay horse in a traunce.	}	vj ^d .
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The earliest notice of Banks's horse yet discovered is in a MS. copy of Donne's Satires, dated 1593, in the British Museum.¹

The "News out of Purgatory" was published soon after Tarlton's death, and his name was connected with it no doubt as an additional attraction for the purchaser. The author of it is unknown, but he confesses it is his first appearance in print. It includes many of the old legends about Purgatory, for the illustration of which a

¹ Collier's Poet. Decam. i., 160.

reference to Mr. Wright's very interesting "Essay on St. Patrick's Purgatory" will be sufficient. In 1590 appeared an answer to it, under the title of "The Cobler of Caunterburie, or an Invective against Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie. A merrier jest then a clownes Jigge, and fitter for Gentlemens humors. Published with the cost of a dickar of cowe hides." It is a story book, very much after the manner of "Westward for Smelts," with poetical descriptions and tales. The following specimen from the commencement will show the way in which the tales are introduced, and likewise include all that relates to Tarlton:—

The Cobler of Caunterburie.

Sitting at the barge in Billingsgate, expecting when the tide would serve for Gravesende, divers passengers of all sortes resorted thither to goe downe. At last it began to ebbe, and then they cried "away." When I came to the staires, although I was resolved to goe downe in a tilt-boate; yet seeing what a crue of madde companions went in the barge, and perceiving by the winde there was no feare of raine, I stept into the barge and tooke up my seate amongst the thickest. With that the barge-men put from the staires, and having a strong ebbe, because there had much raine water fallen before, they went the more merrily downe, and scarce had we gotten beyond Saint Katherins, but that a perry of winde blewe something loude, that the watermen hoist up sailes, and laide by their oares from labour. Being thus under saile, going so snugly downe, it made us all so merry, that wee fel to chat, some of one thing and some of an other, al of myrth, many of knavery; that if Cato Censorius had been there, he woulde either have laughed at their knavish jests, or else at the confusion of their prattles, which seemed like a very chaos of sundry conceites. As thus every man was striving to passe away the time pleasantly, a gentleman puld out of his sleeve a little pamphlet, and began to reade to himselfe: amongst the rest, myselfe was so bold as to aske him what book it was: marry, quoth he, a foolish toy called *Tarltons Newes out of Purgatory*. At this they fell to descanting of the booke; some

commended it highly, and saide it was good invention and fine tales: tush, quoth another, most of them are stolne out of *Boccace Decameron*: for all that, quoth the third, tis pretty and witty. As they were thus commending and discommending, there sate by an auncient man that was a Cobler in Caunterbury: masters, quoth he, I have read the booke, and tis indifferent, like a cup of bottle ale, halfe one and halfe the other: but tis not merry inough for Tarlton's vaine, nor stuffed with his fine conceites, therefore it shall passe for a booke and no more. No, no, what say you to old father Chaucer? how like you of his Caunterburie Tales? are they not pleasant to delight and witty to instruct, and full of conceited learning to shewe the excellencie of his wit? All men commended Chaucer as the father of English poets, and saide that he shot a shoote which many have aimed at, but never reacht to. Well, quoth the cobler, nowe that wee are going to Graves-end, and so I thinke most of us to Caunterbury, let us tell some tales to passe away the time till wee come off the water, and we will call them Caunterburie Tales. To this motion the whole company willingly consented, and onely they stood upon this, who should begin? If it be no offence, quoth the cobler, to other gentlemen that be here, I myselfe will be ringeleader: to this they all agreed, and the cobler began to settle himselfe: yet before hee beginne, I will as neere as I can, describe you what manner of man he was.

The description of the cobler.

His stature was large and tall,
 His lims well set withall.
 Of a strong bone, and a broad chest,
 He was wilde and wildsome in the brest.
 His forehead hie and a bald pate,
 Well I wote he was a mate
 That had loved well a bonnie lasse,
 For the lownes eies were as gray as glasse:
 And oft have I heard my mother say,
 The wanton eie is ere most gray.
 He loved well a cup of strong ale,
 For his nose was nothing pale:
 But his snout and all his face
 Was as red as ruby or topace.

A voice he had cleare and lowde,
 And well he gan sing to a crowde.
 He was a stout sturdie squire,
 And loved week daie good compire.
 Drinke he would with everie man,
 In cup, cruse, glasse, or can :
 And what everie day he got,
 He hoorded up in the ale-pot :
 That all Caunterburie gan lere,
 To talke of this merrie coblere.
 Therefore now marke me well,
 For thus his tale he gan to tell.

Further extracts from this curious work will be found in the Appendix, taken from the later and unique edition of 1608.¹ It was again republished in 1630, under the title of "The Tincker of Turvey, his merry Pastime in his passing from Billingsgate to Gravesend." In this edition, the "Epistle to the Gentlemen Readers" is nearly re-written, "Robin Goodfellow's epistle" is omitted, two new tales are introduced,² the eight orders of cuckolds are different, and the "Old Wives tale" and "The Sömner's tale" are omitted. From "Greene's Vision," it appears that the Cobler of Canterbury had been erroneously attributed to him, which rendered him "passing melancholy."³

¹ There is also entry of it on the Stationers' Registers, 12th June, 1600.

² Called "The tinker's tale" and "The Seaman's tale."

³ "As blinde Baiard will jump soonest into the mire, so have I ventured afore many my betters to put myselfe into the presse, and have set fourth sundrie bookes in print of love and such amorous fancies, which some have favoured and other have misliked. But now of late there came fourth a booke called the Cobler of Caunterburie, a merry worke, and made by some madde fellow, conteining plesant tales, a little tainted

The portrait which forms the frontispiece to the present volume has been carefully copied by Mr. Shaw from an early drawing of Tarlton in MS. Harl., 3885, f. 19, reduced from the original. There is another portrait of Tarlton¹ in the Pepysian library; and in the seventeenth century he, or rather his ghost, appeared in the character of a drummer to annoy a quiet family in Wiltshire. A ballad in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, which has Tarlton's portrait at the top as a drummer, no doubt the same woodcut that was used for the title-page of his "Jests," is thus entitled:—

A wonder of wonders; being a true relation of the strange and invisible beating of a drum at the house of John Mompesson Esquire, at Tidcomb in the county of Wiltshire, being about eight of the clock at night, and continuing till four in the morning, several dayes, one after another, to the great admiration of many persons of honour, gentlemen of quality, and many hundreds who have gone from several parts to hear this miraculous wonder, since the first time it began to beat, "Rounheads and cuckolds, come dig, come dig." Also the burning of a drum that was taken from a drummer. Likewise the manner how the stools and chairs danced about the rooms. The drummer is sent to Glocester gaol. Likewise a great conflict betwixt the evill spirit and Anthony a lusty country fellow. To the tune of, Bragandary, "All you that fear the God on high."

with scurrilitie, such, reverend Chawcer, as yourselfe set fourth in your journey to Canterbury."—*Greene's Vision: Written at the instant of his death, conteyning a penitent passion for the folly of his pen*, 4to., bl. l., no date. Greene adds that this book was *incerti authoris*, and had been "fathered upon him" quite erroneously.

¹ And another is mentioned in Sir William Musgrave's Catalogue, 8vo., Lond., 1800, p. 252, though this may be merely the modern engraving from that in the Pepysian collection.

The flatness of Tarlton's nose is well preserved in the portrait; and it was occasioned, if we may believe the "Jests," p. 29, by an accident in parting dogs and bears. His habit of squinting is alluded to at p. 12. His portrait in the Harleian manuscript is accompanied by the following explanatory verses:¹—

The picture here set down
 Within this letter T:
 A-right doth shew the forme and shape
 Of Tharlton unto the.

When hee in pleasaunt wise
 The counterfet expreste
 Of clowne, with cote of russet hew
 And sturtups with the reste.

¹ These verses have already been printed in the Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts, iii., 94, in Ritson's *Bibliographia Poetica*, in Shaw's *Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages*, and by Mr. Knight in his *Illustrations to Twelfth Night*, act iii. Mr. Knight observes that the portrait in the Harl. MS. was executed by John Scottowe in the reign of Elizabeth, the MS. having the arms of that sovereign on the title-page, with the inscription, "God save Queene Elizabeth longe to reygne." Mr. Knight is of opinion that this circumstance proves the portrait in the MS. to be an earlier performance than the figure prefixed to the "Jests," 1611; but it is scarcely necessary to observe that the woodcut on the latter was in all probability as old as 1600, and perhaps much older. It is not at all likely that a new woodcut was executed for the edition of 1611, an earlier edition having been published. Mr. Knight's woodcut of Tarlton is not among the best of the embellishments of his edition of Shakespeare; but no better example of the passage "dost thou live by thy tabor?" could have been selected. According to Douce, the tabor is found in the hands of fools long before the time of Shakespeare.

Whoe merry many made
 When he appeared in sight;
 The grave and wise, as well as rude,
 At him did take delight.

The partie nowe is gone,
 And closlie clad in claye;
 Of all the jesters in the lande
 He bare the praise awaie.

Now hath he plaid his parte,
 And sure he is of this
 If he in Christe did die to live
 With Him in lasting bliss.

Harvey, in his "Foure Letters and certaine Sonnets," 1592, frequently alludes to Tarlton, and associates his name more than once with Greene. "Tarlton's amplifications A per se A," mentioned at p. 34 of that work, may allude to a work of Tarlton's, or perhaps to his system of extending words for the sake of producing a ridiculous compound, as for instance his answer, "without all *paraquestions*!"¹ If the Robert Greene mentioned with Tarlton in MS. Sloane, 2530, be really the poet, and Mr. Dyce's memoir of the former does not assist us in verifying the fact, they were probably companions from early youth.

In concluding our collection of these scattered notices of Tarlton, which it is to be regretted are not more explicit and satisfactory, it may be necessary to observe that the grossness of two articles in the original edition

¹ Ulysses upon Ajax, 1596, Sig D.

of the "Jests" made it requisite to diminish the present reprint "lesser than a little" by rejecting them, purifying our own pages at the expence of destroying the purity of the ancient text. We are not for our own part very squeamish in these matters, believing that those who can read the whole of Shakespeare's works as they have come down to us may bear almost any thing in this way; but as the passages now omitted convey no information, and certainly are not worthy of preservation from their language, no good purpose would have been answered by retaining them. This is no recent subject of complaint; and from the books of the Stationers' Company it appears that on March 7th, 1590, a "ballad of a yonge man that went a woynge" was "cancelled out of the book for the undecentnes of it in diverse verses:" but knowing as we well do that the good people of that day were not over-nice, there must have been something very atrocious in the said ballad to have merited so severe a condemnation.

I beg leave to return my best acknowledgments to the Court of the Stationers' Company for the readiness with which they gave me access to their valuable records; to J. P. Collier, Esq., for most valuable assistance, and especially for the copy of the unique MS. of Tarlton's Jig, a liberality which will be highly appreciated by all who are acquainted with the extreme rarity of that class of compositions; and to William Longman, Esq., G. Greenhill, Esq., C. Rivington, Esq., the Rev. Edward Wix, and Peter Cunningham, Esq., for various acts of politeness while I was engaged in collecting materials

for a life of Tarlton, my principal difficulty arising from the great rarity of the works which required to be consulted, several of them existing only in one or two copies in repositories widely distant from each other. Not only would it be in vain to look in the British Museum for either of the tracts now reprinted, but few of the rarer pieces quoted in the preceding pages have hitherto found their way into our national library.

J. O. HALLIWELL.

Jan. 14th, 1844.



TARLTON'S JESTS.

Tarltons Jests, Drawn into three parts: His Court Witty Jests; His Sound City Jests; His Country pretty Jests; full of Delight, Wit, and honest Mirth. 1611. 4to.

Another edition was published in 1638, but appears to be the same impression with a different title-page. On both title-pages is a portrait of Tarlton, at full length, with his tabret. The portrait on the following page is taken from a MS. in the Harleian collection, but it differs so slightly from the woodcut on the title-page of the "Jests," that it was not considered necessary to give both. The principal variation is a line of buttons on the right side of Tarlton's coat.

The three parts of *Tarlton's Jests* were originally published separately. On 4th August, 1600, Thomas Pavier had license to print "the second parte of Tarltons Jestes;" and, for reasons mentioned in the Introduction, the first part probably was not published much earlier. It appears, also, from the books of the Stationers' Company, that on February 21st, 1608, *Tarlton's Jests* was assigned over to Mr. Knight from John Budge, "with the consente of Mr. Lownes, warden." Mr. Collier is, therefore, quite right in conjecturing that the edition of 1611 was not the first, although the earliest now known to exist. See Introduction to Armin's *Nest of Ninnies*, p. xi.



RICHARD TARLTON.

TARLTON'S COURT-WITTY JESTS.

How Tarlton plaid the drunkard before the Queene.

The Queene being discontented, which Tarlton perceiving, took upon him to delight her with some quaint jest : whereupon he counterfaieted a drunkard, and called for beere, which was brought immediately. Her Majestie, noting his humor, commanded that he should have no more ; for, quoth shee, he will play the beast, and so shame himselfe. Feare not you, quoth Tarlton, for your beere is small enough. Whereat Her Majestie laughed heartily, and commanded that he should have enough.

How Tarlton deceived the watch in Fleetstreet.

Tarlton, having bin late at court, and comming homewards thorow Fleetstreet, he espied the watch, and, not knowing how to passe them, hee went very fast, thinking by that meanes to goe unexmained : but the watchmen, percieving that hee shunned them, stept to him and commanded him, in the queene's name, to stand. Stand ? quoth Tarlton, let them stand that can, for I cannot. So, falling downe as though he had been drunke, they helpt him up, and so let him passe.

How Tarlton flouted a lady in the court.

Upon a time, Tarlton being among certaine ladies at a banquet which was at Greenewich, the queene then lying there, one of the ladies had her face full of pimples with heat at her stomake; for which cause she refused to drinke wine amongst the rest of the ladies: which Tarlton perceiving, for he was there of purpose to jest amongst them, quoth he: A murren of that face, which makes all the body fare the worse for it. At which the rest of the ladies laught, and she, blushing for shame, left the banquet.

Tarlton's opinion of oysters.

Certaine noblemen and ladies of the court, being eating of oysters, one of them, seeing Tarlton, called him, and asked him if he loved oysters. No, quoth Tarlton, for they be ungodly meate, uncharitable meat, and unprofitable meate. Why? quoth the courtiers. They are ungodly, sayes Tarlton, because they are eaten without grace; uncharitable, because they leave nought but shells; and unprofitable, because they must swim in wine.

Tarlton's resolution of a question.

One of the company taking the gentlemen part, asked Tarlton at what time he thought the divell to be most busied. When the pope dies, quoth he. Why, saies the courtier. Marry, answered he, then all the devells are troubled and busied to plague him; for he hath sent many a soule before him thither, that exclaime against him.

How a parsonage fell in Tarlton's hands.

Her Majestie, dining in the Strand at the Lord Treasurers,¹ the lords were very desirous that she would vouchsafe to stay

¹ Burghley House, in the Strand.

all night, but nothing could prevaile with her. Tarlton was in his clownes apparell, being all dinner while in the presence with her, to make her merry ; and hearing the sorrow that the noblemen made that they could not worke her stay, he asked the nobles what they would give him to worke her stay. The lords promised him any thing, to performe it. Quoth he, procure me the parsonage of Shard. They caused the patent to be drawne presently. He got on a parson's gowne and a corner-cap, and, standing upon the stairs, where the queene should descend, he repeated these words : A parson or no parson ? A parson, or no parson ? But, after she knew his meaning, shee not only stayd all night, but the next day willed he should have possession of the benefice. A madder parson was never, for he threatned to turne the bellmettle into lynning for his purse ; which he did, the parsonage and all, into ready money.

How Tarlton proved two gentlewomen dishonest by their owne words.

Tarlton seeing in Greenwich two gentlewomen in the garden together, to move mirth, comes to them, and enquires thus : Gentlewomen, which of you two is the honestest ? I, sayes the one, I hope, without exceptions : and I, quoth the other, since we must speake for ourselves. So, then, sayes Tarlton, one of you, by your own words, is dishonest, one being honestest than the other, else you would answer otherwise ; but, as I found you, so I leave you.

How Tarlton answered a wanton gentlewoman.¹

* * * * *

¹ This anecdote, *pudoris causa*, I have thought it expedient to omit. There is no fact of any importance in it.

How Tarlton dared a lady.

At the dinner in the great chamber, where Tarlton jested, the ladies were daring one another. Quoth one, I ever durst do any thing that is honest and honourable. A French crowne of that, sayes Tarlton. Ten pound of that, sayes the lady. Done, sayes one. Done, sayes another. Tarlton put two pence betwixt his lips, and dared her to take it away with her lips. Fie, sayes shee, that is immodesty. What, to kisse? says Tarlton, then immodesty beares a great hand over all: but once in your life, say you have beene beaten at your owne weapon. Well, sir, sayes shee, you may say any thing. Then, sayes Tarlton, remember I say you dare not, and so my wager is good.

How Tarlton landed at Cuckolds-haven.¹

Tarlton being one Sunday at court all day, caused a paire of oares² to tend him, who at night called on him to be gone. Tarlton, being a carousing, drunk so long to the watermen, that one of them was bumpsie;³ and so, indeede, were all three for the most part. At last they left Greenwich, the tide being at great low fall, the watermen yet afraide of the crosse cables by the Lime house, very dark and late as it was, landed Tarlton at Cuckolds-haven, and said, the next day they would give him a reason for it. But Tarlton was faine to goe by land to Redriffe on the dirty banke, every step knee-deepe: so that, comming home, hee called one of his boyes to help him off with his boots, meaning his stockings, which were died of

¹ A spot on the river Thames, a little below Rotherhithe, still called Cuckold's Point. See Webster's Works, iii., 197, for an account of the curious tradition respecting this spot. The court of course was then at Greenwich.

² That is, two watermen.

³ Nearly tipsy.

another colour. Whereupon one gave him this theame next day :

Tarlton, tell mee, for fayne would I know,
If thou wert landed at Cuckolds-haven or no ?

Tarlton answered thus:—

Yes, sir, I tak't in no scorne,
For many land there, yet misse of the horne.

How Tarlton fought with Black Davie.

Not long since lived a little swaggerer, called Blacke Davie, who would at sword and buckler fight with any gentleman or other for twelve pence. He being hired to draw upon Tarlton, for breaking a jest upon huffing Kate, a punke, as men termed her, one evening, Tarlton comming forth at the court gate, being at Whitehall, and walking toward the Tilt yard, this Davie immediately drew upon Tarlton, who on the sudden, though amazed, drew likewise, and enquired the cause ; which Davie denied till they had fought a bout or two. Tarlton courageously got within him, and, taking him in his armes, threw him into the Tilt yard ; who, falling upon his nose, broke it extremely, that ever after he snuffled in the head. Poore Davie, lying all that night in the Tilt yard, expecting the doores to be opened, came forth, and at the barber-surgeons told of this bloody combat. And the occasion of it was, quoth he, because Tarlton, being in a taverne, in the company of this damnable cockatrice,¹ huffing Kate, called for wine ; but she told him that, without he would burne it, she would not drink. No, quoth Tarlton, it shall be burnt, for thou canst burne it without fire. As how, sir, quoth she. Mary, thus : take the cup in thine hand, and I will tell thee. So he, filling the

¹ A common name for a woman of bad character. See Old Plays, ed. 1825, iv., 84 : " now-a-days, no courtier but has his mistress, no captain but has his *cockatrice*, no cuckold but has his horns, and no fool but has his feather."

cup in her hand, said it was burnt sufficiently in so fiery a place. Shee perceiving herselfe so flouted, hired me to be her champion to revenge her quarrell.

How Tarlton answered the watchmen, comming from the court.

Tarlton having plaid before the queene till one a clock at midnight, comming homewards, one of them espied him, called him, Sirra, what art thou? A woman, sayes Tarlton. Nay, that is a lye, say the watchmen, women have no such beards. Tarlton replied: If I should have said a man, that you know to be true, and would have bidden me tel you that you know not? therefore, I said a woman; and so I am all woman, having pleased the queene, being a woman. Well, sirra, sayes another, I presente the queene. Then am I a woman, indeed, sayes Tarlton, as well as you; for you have a beard as well as I, and truly, Mistriss Annis, my buske¹ is not done yet; when will yours? Leave thy gibing, fellow, saith the watch: the queenes will is, that whosoever is taken without doores after ten a clocke, shall bee committed; and now it is past one. Commit all such, sayes Tarlton, for if it be past one a clock, it will not be ten this eight houres. With that one lifts up his lanthorne, and lookes him in the face, and knew him. Indeed, M. Tarlton, you have more wit then all we; for it is true that ten was before one, but now one is before ten. It is true, quoth Tarlton, watchmen had wont to have more wit, but for want of sleepe, they are turned fooles. So Tarlton stole from them, and they, to seeme wise, went home to bed.

Tarlton's answer to a courtier.

Tarlton being in the court all night, in the morning he met a great courtier comming from his chamber, who, espying Tarl-

¹ A piece of wood, or whalebone, worn down the front of the stays, to keep them straight. According to Hall, they were often used by men as well as women. Nares errs in thinking the term obsolete.

ton, said, Goodmorrow, M. Didimus and Tridimus. Tarlton, being somewhat abashed, not knowing the meaning thereof, said, Sir, I understand you not ; expound, I pray you. Quoth the courtier, Didimus and Tridimus is a foole and a knave. You overloade me, replied Tarlton, for my backe cannot beare both ; therefore, take you the one and I will take the other ; take you the knave, and I will carry the foole with me.

Tarlton's quip for a yong courtier.

There was a yong gentleman in the court that had first bin with the mother, and after with the daughter ; and, having so done, asked Tarlton what it resembled. Quoth he : As if you should first have eaten the hen, and after the chicken.

Tarlton's answer to a nobleman's question.

There was a nobleman that asked Tarlton what hee thought of souldiers in time of peace. Marry, quoth he, they are like chimnies in summer.

Tarlton's Jest to an unthrifty courtier.

There was an unthrifitie gallant belonging to the court that had borowd five pounds of Tarlton ; but having lost it at dice, he sent his man to Tarlton to borrow five pounds more, by the same token hee owed him already five pounds. Pray tel your master, quoth Tarlton, that if he will send me the token, I will send him the money ; for who deceives me once, God forgive him ; if twice, God forgive him ; but if thrice, God forgive him, but not me, because I could not beware.

How Tarlton flouted two gallants.

Tarlton being in a merry vaine, as hee walked in the great Hall in Greenwich, hee met my old Lord Chamber-

laine¹ going betweene two fantasticke gallants, and cryed aloud unto him, My lord, my lord, you goe in great danger : whereat, amazed, hee asked whereof : of drowning, quoth Tarlton, were it not for those two bladders under each of your armes.

TARLTON'S SOUND CITY JESTS.

Tarlton's jest of a red face.

To an ordinary in White Fryers, where gentlemen used, by reason of extraordinary diet, to this Tarlton often frequented, as well to continue acquaintance as to please his appetite. It chanced so upon a time especially, being set amongst the gentlemen and gallants, they enquired of him why melancholy had got the upper hand of his mirth. To which he said little, but, with a squint eye, as custome had made him hare eyed, hee looked for a jest to make them merry. At last he espied one that sate on his left side, which had a very red face, he being a very great gentleman, which was all one to Tarlton, hee presently in great haste called his host, Who doe I serve, my host, quoth Tarlton. The Queenes Majestie, replied the good man of the house. How happens it then, quoth Tarlton, that to her Majesties disgrace, you dare make me a companion with servingmen, clapping my Lord Shandoyes cul-lisance² upon my sleeve, looking at the gentleman with the red face. Mee thinks, quoth he, it fits like the Saracens head without Newgate.³ The gentlemans salamanders⁴ face burnt

¹ ? the Marquess of Winchester.

² A badge of arms. According to Hentzner, 1598, the English liked "to be followed wherever they go by whole troops of servants, who wear their masters' arms in silver fastened to their left arms."

³ This inn still remains in Skinner Street.

⁴ In the First Part of Henry IV., act iii., sc. 3, Falstaff says to Bardolph, "I have maintain'd that *salamander* of yours with fire any time this two and thirty years; Heaven reward me for it!" This is of course an allusion to Bardolph's red face.

like Etna for anger. The rest laughed heartily. In the end, all enraged, the gentleman swore to fight with him at next meeting.

A sudden and dangerous fray twixt a gentleman and Tarlton, which he put off with a jest.

As Tarlton and others passed along Fleet Street, he espied a spruce yong gallant, black of complexion, with long haire hanging downe over his eares, and his beard of the Italian cut,¹ in white sattin very quaintly cut, and his body so stiffely starcht, that he could not bend himselfe any way for no gold. Tarlton seeing such a wonder comming, trips before him, and, meeting this gallant, tooke the wall of him, knowing that one so proud at least looked for the prerogative. The gallant, scorning that a player should take the wall, or so much indig-nifie² him, turnes himselfe, and presently drew his rapier. Tarlton drew likewise. The gentleman fell to it roundly; but Tarlton, in his owne defence, compassing and traversing his ground,³ gaped with a wide mouth, whereat the people laughed. The gentleman, pausing, enquired why he gaped so. O, sir, saies he, in hope to swallow you; for, by my troth, you seeme to me like a prune in a messe of white broth. At this the people parted them. The gentleman noting his mad humour, went his way well contented; for he knew not how to amend it.

Tarlton's Jest of a pippin.

At the Bull in Bishops-gate-street, where the queenes players oftentimes played, Tarlton comming on the stage, one

¹ The "Italian cut" is mentioned in a chapter on beards in Stubbe's "Anatomic of Abuses," 1583. See also Repton's "Account of the Beard and the Moustachio," 1839, p. 16.

² Insult him, offend his dignity.

³ Tarlton was well skilled in fencing. See Malone's Shakespeare, ed. Boswell, viii., 30, and Introduction.

from the gallery threw a pippin at him. Tarlton tooke up the pip, and, looking on it, made this sudden jest :—

Pip in, or nose in, chuse you whether,
Put yours in, ere I put in the other.
Pippin you have put in : then, for my grace,
Would I might put your nose in another place.

A jest of an apple hitting Tarlton on the face.

Tarlton having flouted the fellow for his pippin which hee threw, hee thought to be meet with Tarlton¹ at length. So in the play, Tarlton's part was to travell, who, kneeling down to aske his father blessing, the fellow threw an apple at him, which hit him on the cheek. Tarlton taking up the apple, made this jest :—

Gentlemen, this fellow, with this face of mapple,
Instead of a pipin, hath thrown me an apple,
But as for an apple, he hath cast a crab ;
So, instead of an honest woman, God hath sent him a drab.

The people laughed heartily, for he had a qucene to his wife.

How Tarlton and one in the gallery fell out.

It chanced that in the midst of a play, after long expectation for Tarlton, being much desired of the people, at length hee came forth, where, at his entrance, one in the gallerie pointed his finger at him, saying to a friend that had never seene him, that is he. Tarlton to make sport at the least occasion given him, and seeing the man point with the finger, he in love againe held up two fingers. The captious fellow, jealous of his wife, for he was married, and because a player did it, took the matter

¹ Or, as we should now say, to be even with him.

more hainously, and asked him why he made hornes at him. No, quoth Tarlton, they be fingers :

For there is no man, which in love to me,
Lends me one finger, but he shall have three.

No, no, sayes the fellow, you gave me the hornes. True, sayes Tarlton, for my fingers are tipt with nailes, which are like hornes, and I must make a shew of that which you are sure of. This matter grew so, that the more he meddled the more it was for his disgrace ; wherefore the standers by counselled him to depart, both hee and his hornes, lest his cause grew desperate. So the poore fellow, plucking his hat over his eyes, went his wayes.

How fiddlers fiddled away Tarlton's apparell.

It chanced that one Fancy and Nancy, two musicians in London, used often with their boyes to visit Tarlton when he dwelt in Gracious-street, at the signe of the Saba,¹ a tavernne, he being one of their best friends or benefactors, by reason of old acquaintance, to requite which they came one summer's morning to play him *The Hunt's up*² with such musicke as they had. Tarlton, to requite them, would open his chamber doore, and for their paines would give them muskadine ; which a cony-catcher³ noting, and seeing Tarlton come forth in his shirt and nightgowne to drinke with these musicians, the while this nimble fellow stept in and tooke Tarltons apparell, which every day he wore, thinking that if he were espied to turne it to jest ; but it passed for currant and he goes his wayes. Not long after, Tarlton returned to his chamber, and looked for his

¹ See a note further on.

² The name of the tune played to wake the hunters and collect them together. It was also used for any morning song. See Collier's *Shakespeare*, vi., 453.

³ A sharper, a cheat.

cloathes, but they were safe enough from him. The next day this was noised abroad, and one in mockage threw him in this theame, he playing then at the Curtaine.¹

Tarlton, I will tell thee a jest
Which after turned to earnest.
One there was, as I heard say,
Who in his shirt heard musicke play,
While all his clothes were stolne away.

Tarlton smiling at this, answered on the sudden thus:—

That's certaine, sir, it is no lie,
That same one in truth was I.
When that the theefe shall pine and lacke,
Then shall I have cloathes to my backe:
And I, together with my fellowes,
May see them ride to Tiborne gallowes.

Of Tarlton and a beggar.

There was a poore begger, but a conceited fellow, who seeing Tarlton at his doore, asked something of him for Gods cause. Tarlton putting his hand in his pocket, gave him two pence, instead of a penny: at which Tarlton made this ryme:—

Of all the beggers most happy thou art,
For to thee mine hand is better then my heart.

Quoth the begger:—

True it is, master, as it chanceth now:
The better for me, and the worse for you.²

¹ A theatre in Shoreditch, built about the year 1576. See Collier's Annals, iii., 269. Tarlton lived in High Street, Shoreditch, very near this theatre.

² This line is proverbial, and the last in a verse sung on the 5th of November by children in country villages.

How Tarlton deceived a doctor of physicke.

Tarlton, to satisfie the humours of certaine gentlemen, his familiar acquaintance, went about for to try the skil of a simple doctor of physick, that dwelt not far from Islington, and thus it was ; he tooke a faire urinal, and filled it halfe full of good wine, and bore it to this doctor, saying it was a sicke man's water : he viewed it, and tossing it up and downe, as though he had great knowledge : quoth he, the patient whose water it is, is full of grosse humors, and hath neede of purging, and to be let some ten ounces of bloud. No, you dunce, replied Tarlton, it is good [water], and with that drunke it off, and threw the urinall at his head.

How Tarlton frightened a country fellow.

Tarlton, passing through London, by chance he heard a simple country fellow in an alehouse, calling for a Kingstone pot of ale, stept in to him, and threatened to accuse him of treason, saying, sirra, I have seene and tasted of a penny pot of ale, and have found good of the price, but of a Kingstone coyne I never heard, therefore it is some counterfet, and I must know how thou camest by it. Hereupon, the country fellow was driven into such amaze that out of doores he got, and tooke him to his heeles, as though wilde fire had followed him.

How Tarlton was deceived by his wife in London.

Tarlton, being merrily disposed, as his wife and he sate together, he said unto her, Kate, answer me to one question without a lye, and take this crown of gold ; which shee took on condition, that if she lost, to restore it back again. Quoth Tarlton, am I a cuckold or no, Kate ? Whereat shee answered not a word, but stood silent, notwithstanding he urged her many waies. Tarlton seeing she would not speak, askt his gold

again. Why, quoth shee, have I made any lye? no, sayes Tarlton: why then good man foole, I have won the wager. Tarlton mad with anger, made this rime,

As women in speech can revile a man,
So can they in silence beguile a man.

One askt Tarlton what country man the divell was.

In Carter Lane dwelt a merry cobbler, who being in company with Tarlton, askt him what countryman the divell was: quoth Tarlton, a Spaniard, for Spaniards, like the divell, trouble the whole world.¹

A cheese-monger's question to Tarlton.

In time of scarcity, a simple cheese-monger hearing Tarlton commended for his quick wit came unto him and asked him why he thought cheese and butter to be so deere, Tarlton answered, because wood and coales are so deare, for butter and cheese a man may eate without a fire.

Tarlton's answer to a rich Londoner.

Tarlton, meeting a rich Londoner, fell into talke about the Bishop of Peterborough, highly praising his bountie to his servants, his liberality to strangers, his great hospitality, and charity to the poore: he doth well, sayes the rich man, for what he hath, he hath but during his life: Why, quoth Tarlton, for how many lives have you your goods?

How Tarlton gave away his dinner.

As Tarlton and his wife sate at dinner, his wife being displeased with him, and thinking to crosse him, she gave away

¹ This possibly alludes to the Spanish Armada in 1588, in which year Tarlton died.

halfe his meate unto a poore begger, saying, Take this for my other husband's sake. Whereupon Tarlton tooke all that was left, and likewise bade the poore fellow to pray for his other wives soule.

*Tarlton's answers to a boy in a rime.*¹

There was a crack-rope² boy, meeting Tarlton in London street, sung this rime unto Tarlton :

Woe worth³ thee Tarlton
That ever thou wast borne ;
Thy wife hath made thee cuckold
And thou must weare the horne.

Tarlton presently answered him in extemporie :

What and if I be, boy,
I'me ne're the worse ;
She keepes me like a gentleman,
With mony in my parse.

How Tarlton bad himselfe to dinner to my Lord Maiors.

A jest came in Tarlton's head where to dine, and thought he, in all that a man does, let him aime at the fairest, for sure if I bid my selfe any where this day, it shall be to my Lord Maiors,

¹ This anecdote also occurs in MS. Sloane 1489, fol. 19, with a few immaterial variations.

² "A *crack-rope*, one that groans for the gallows, un pendart, un fripon, un coquin, un scelerat."—*Miege*.

³ A common expression in early authors, meaning, "Woe betide thee." Ray says it was used in his time in the north of England. See his *English Words*, 1674, p. 52. Compare *Troilus and Creseide*, iv. 763 :—

"O mothir mine, that clepid wer Argive,
Wo worth that daie that thou me bare on live!"

Woe worthe thee, means, *woe be to thee*, or *woe become to thee*.

and upon this goes to the Counter, and entered his action against my Lord Maior, who was presently told of it, and sends for him. Tarlton waits dinner time, and then comes, who was admitted presently. Master Tarlton, saies my Lord Maior, have you entered an action against me in the Poultry Counter? My Lord, saies Tarlton, have you entred an action against mee in Woodstreet Counter? Not I, in troth, saies My Lord. No! saies Tarlton, he was a villaine that told me so then; but if it bee not so, forgive me this fault, My Lord, and I will never offend in the next. But in the end he begins to sweare how he will be revenged on him that mockt him, and flings out in a rage. But my lord said, stay, M. Tarlton, dine with me, and no doubt but after dinner you will be better minded. I will try that, my lord, saies Tarlton, and, if it alter mine anger, both mine enemy and I will thanke you together for this courtesie.

Tarlton's jest of a box on the eare.

One that fell out with his friend, meetes him in the street, and calling him into a corner, gave him a box on the eare, and feld him, getting him gone, and never told wherefore he did so, which Tarlton beholding, raised up the fellow, and asked him the reason of their sudden falling out. Can you tell, sir, said the fellow? for by my troth as yet I cannot. Well, said Tarlton, the more foole you, for had I such feeling of the cause, my wit would remember the injurie; but many men are goslings, the more they feele the lesse they conceive.

Tarlton's jest to two tailors.

Tarlton, meeting two tailors, friends of his, in the evening, in mirth cries, Who goes there? A man, answered a tailor. How many is there? One. Yea, said Tarlton. Two, said the other tailor. Then you say true, said Tarlton, for two

tailors goe to a man.¹ But before they parted they foxt² Tarlton at the Castle in Pater Noster Row, that Tarlton confest them two tailors to be honest men. So what they spent in the purse they got in the person. Comming but one, by Tarlton's account, they returned two, but Tarlton comming one, returned lesse by his wit, for that was shrunk in the wetting.

How Tarlton jested at his wife.

Tarlton and his wife keeping an ordinary in Pater Noster Row, were bidden³ out to supper, and because he was a man noted, shee would not goe with him in the street, but intreats him to keepe one side, and she another, which he consented to. But as he went, hee would cry out to her, and say, Turne that way, wife, and anon, on this side, wife; so the people flockt the more to laugh at them. But his wife, more than mad angry, goes backe againe, and almost forswore his company.

How Tarlton committed a raker's⁴ horse to ward.

When Tarlton dwelt in Gracious street,⁵ at a tavern at the sign of the Saba,⁶ he was chosen scavenger, and often the ward complained of his slacknesse in keeping the streets cleane. So

¹ Tailors seem to have decreased in reputation, as in modern times *nine* are said to go to a man.

² Made him tipsy. Grose gives this cant term in his *Class. Dict. Vulgar Tongue*, ed. 1796, in v. *Foxed*, and the word is not uncommon in Elizabethan writers.

³ Invited. It is still used in the north of England.

⁴ A person who raked the dirt off the road or street.

⁵ That is, Gracechurch Street.

⁶ The name of this sign has been converted into the Bell-Savage. See Douce's note in *Malone's Shakespeare*, ed. 1821, xi. 429; *Weber's Metrical Romances*, i. 263, and the note on l. 6389. In *Kyng Alisaunder*, the Queen of Sheba is called "Sibely savage," which renders the transformation easy.

on a time, when the cart came, he asked the raker why he did his businesse so slacklye : Sir, said he, my fore horse was in the fault, who, being let bloud and drencht yesterday, I durst not labour him. Sir, said Tarlton, your horse shall smart for it, and so leads him to the counter ; which the raker laught at, and, without his horse, did his worke with the rest, thinking Tarlton's humour was but to jest, and would returne him his horse againe anon. But when that anon came, hee was faine to pay all his fees of the prison, as directly as if hee himselfe had beene there. For if Tarlton had committed the master the businesse had not gone forward ; therefore the horse was in prison for the master.

How Tarlton made Armin¹ his adopted sonne, to succeed him.

Tarlton keeping a taverne in Gracious street, hee let it to another, who was indebted to Armin's master, a goldsmith in Lombard street, yet he himselfe had a chamber in the same house. And this Armin, being then a wag, came often thither to demand his masters money, which he sometimes had, and sometimes had not. In the end the man growing poore, told the boy hee had no money for his master, and hee must beare with him. The man's name being Charles, Armin made this verse, writing it with chalke on a wainescot :—

O world, why wilt thou lye ?
Is this Charles the great ! that I deny.
Indeed Charles the great before,
But now Charles the lesse, being poore.

Tarlton comming into the roome, reading it, and partly ac-

¹ Armin was one of the original performers in Shakespeare's plays, and the present very curious and singular anecdote has been mentioned by Mr. Collier in the Introduction to the "Nest of Ninnies," omitting, however, some particulars.

quainted with the boyes humour, comming often thither for his master's money, tooke a piece of chalk, and wrote this ryme by it :—

A wagge thou art, none can prevent thee ;
 And thy desert shall content thee.
 Let me divine. As I am,
 So in time thou'lt be the same,
 My adopted sonne therefore be,
 To enjoy my clownes sute after me.

And see how it fell out. The boy reading this, so loved Tarlton after, that regarding him with more respect, hee used to his playes, and fell in a league with his humour : and private practise brought him to present playing, and at this houre performs the same, where, at the Globe on the Banks side men may see him.¹

Tarlton's greeting with Banks his horse.

There was one, Banks, in the time of Tarlton, who served the Earle of Essex,² and had a horse of strange qualities, and being at the Crosse-keyes in Gracious streete, getting mony

¹ This is an evidence that Armin was living, and playing at the Globe in 1600, when the second part of these jests was printed, but is no evidence that he was alive in 1611, as Malone seems to conclude. Mr. Collier conjectures that Armin died in the year 1606.

² This seems to be a new fact in Banks' history. From a quotation in Douce's *Illustrations*, vol. i. p. 214, it appears he was a vintner in Cheapside, and the same profession seems to be indicated here. It has been generally said that the famous horse was not exhibited till after Tarlton's death. I think the allusion to this "jest," in Bastard's work quoted below, a strong evidence that there is a possibility of this tale being at least founded on fact. A little tract, entitled "*Maroccus Extaticus*," was published in 1595, but gives no particulars of value. Its recent re-publication will confirm Mr. Collier's disappointment with it. The preface to this reprint contains several particulars extracted from the

with him, as he was mightily resorted to. Tarlton then, with his fellowes, playing at the Bel by,¹ came into the Crosse-keyes, amongst many people, to see fashions, which Banks perceiving, to make the people laugh, saies Signior, to his horse, Go fetch me the veryest foole in the company. The jade comes immediately and with his mouth drawes Tarlton forth. Tarlton, with merry words, said nothing, but "God a mercy horse." In the end Tarlton, seeing the people laugh so, was angry inwardly, and said, Sir, had I power of your horse, as you have, I would doe more than that. What ere it be, said Banks, to please him, I will charge him to do it. Then, saies Tarlton, charge him to bring me the veriest whore-master² in the company. The horse leades his master to him. Then "God a mercy horse, indeed," saies Tarlton. The people had much ado to keep peace: but Bankes and Tarlton had like to have squar'd, and the horse by to give aime.³ But ever after it was a by word thorow London, God a mercy horse, and is to this day.

An excellent jest of Tarlton suddenly spoken.

At the Bull at Bishops-gate was a play of Henry the fift,⁴ wherein the judge was to take a box on the eare; and because

variorum Shakespeare, ed. 1821, vol. iv. p. 299-300, and Douce's Illustrations, vol. i. p. 212-4, but no notice is taken of this anecdote. The presumed age of the horse in 1601 can scarcely be considered a safe argument one way or the other, the eye-witness not speaking from actual knowledge.

¹ Near at hand.

² This certainly appears to be alluded to in Bastard's "Chrestoloros," 1598:—"Bankes, who taught your horse to smell a knave?"

³ A figure taken from archery. See Nares, in v. *Aim*.

⁴ Not Shakespeare's play of that name, but an earlier drama, which has probably come to us in a mutilated shape, entitled "The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth," from which Shakespeare may have taken the idea of the robbery at Gadshill in his Henry IV. Tarlton's usual part was that of Derick, the clown, not that of the judge, as stated by the commentators.

he was absent that should take the blow, Tarlton himself, ever forward to please, tooke upon him to play the same judge, besides his owne part of the clowne: and Knel¹ then playing Henry the fift, hit Tarlton a sound boxe indeed, which made the people laugh the more because it was he, but anon the judge goes in, and immediately Tarlton in his clownes cloathes comes out, and askes the actors what newes: O saith one hadst thou been here, thou shouldest have seene Prince Henry hit the judge a terrible box on the eare: What, man, said Tarlton, strike a judge? It is true, yfaith, said the other. No other like, said Tarlton, and it could not be but terrible to the judge, when the report so terrifies me, that me thinkes the blow remains still on my cheeke, that it burnes againe. The people laught at this mightily: and to this day I have heard it commended for rare; but no marvell, for he had many of these. But I would see our clowns in these dayes do the like: no, I warrant ye, and yet they thinke well of themselves to.

Tarlton's jest with a boy in the street.

A wag halter boy met Tarlton in the street, and said, Master Tarlton who lives longest? Mary, boy, saies Tarlton, he that dies latest. And why dye men so fast? said the boy. Because they want breath, said Tarlton. No, rather, said the boy, because their time is come. Then thy time is come, said Tarlton; see who comes yonder. Who? said the boy. Mary, said Tarlton, Bull, the hangman, or one that would willingly be thy hangman. Nay, hang me then, if I imploy him at this time, said the boy. Well, said Tarlton, then thou wilt be hanged by thy owne confession: and so they parted.

¹ An eminent actor, thus mentioned with Tarlton in the very curious verses printed by Mr. Collier, in his *Memoirs of Alleyn*, p. 13:—

“Tarlton himselfe thou doest excell,
And Bentley beate, and conquer Knell.”

A jest of Tarlton, proving mustard to have wit.

Tarlton keeping an ordinary in Paternoster row, and sitting with gentlemen to make them merry, would approve mustard standing before them to have wit. How so? saies one. It is like a witty scold, meeting another scold, knowing that scold will scold, begins to scold first: so, saies he, the mustard being lickt up, and knowing that you will bite it, begins to bite you first. He try that, saies a gull by; and the mustard so tickled him that his eyes watered. How now, saies Tarlton; does my jest savour? I, saies the gull, and bite too. If you had had better wit, saies Tarlton, you would have bit first: so then conclude with me that dumbe unfeeling mustard hath more wit than a talking unfeeling foole, as you are. Some were pleased, and some were not; but all Tarlton's care was taken for his resolution was ever, before he talkt any jest.

How Tarlton tooke tobacco at the first comming up of it.¹

Tarlton, as other gentlemen used, at the first comming up of tobacco, did take it more for fashions sake then otherwise,² and being in a roome, set between two men overcome with wine, and they never seeing the like, wondred at it, and seeing the vapour come out of Tarlton's nose, cryed out, fire, fire, and threw a cup of wine in Tarlton's face. Make no more stirre, quoth Tarlton, the fire is quenched: if the sheriffes come, it will turne to a fine, as the custome is. And drinking that againe, fie, sayes the other, what a stinke it makes; I am almost poy-

¹ This story is generally told of Sir Walter Raleigh, who brought tobacco into this country.

² Cigars are often now used in a similar manner. The introduction of tobacco does not need a note, but it is worthy of remark that Shakespeare never once mentions the weed, an argument perhaps in favour of the early composition of his plays.

soned. If it offend, saies Tarlton, let's every one take a little of the smell, and so the savour will quickly goe: but tobacco whiffes made them leave him to pay all.

TARLTON'S PRETTY COUNTRY JESTS.

Tarlton's wit betweene a Bird and a Woodcock.

In the city of Gloucester M. Bird¹ of the chappell met with Tarlton, who, joyfull to regreet other, went to visit his friends: amongst the rest, M. Bird, of the queenes chappell, visited M. Woodcock of the colledge, when meeting, many friendly speeches past, amongst which, M. Woodcock challenged M. Bird of him, who mused that hee was of his affinity and hee never knew it. Yes, sayes M. Woodcock, every woodcock is a bird, therefore it must needs be so. Lord, sir, sayes Tarlton, you are wide,² for though every woodcock be a bird, yet every bird is not a woodcock. So Master Woodcock like a woodcock bit his lip, and mumbudget³ was silent.

Tarlton's jest of a gridiron.⁴

While the queenes players lay in Worcester city to get money, it was his custome for to sing extempore of theames given him: amongst which they were appointed to play the next day: now one fellow of the city amongst the rest, that seemed quaint of conceit, to lead other youths with his fine wit, gave out that

¹ A well known musician of the time. See Warton's *Hist. Engl. Poet.*, ed. 1840, iii., 64; and *Archæologia*, xxv., 103, 110.

² Far from the mark.

³ A cant word, implying silence. It is Slender's watchword in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, act v., sc. 5.

⁴ The verses in this tale are found in a MS. of the time of Charles I. in the British Museum, MS. Sloan. 1489, fol. 19, taken probably from the printed edition.

the next day hee would give him a theam, to put him to a nonplus. Divers of his friends acquainted with the same expected some rare conceit. Well, the next day came, and my gallant gave him his invention in two lines, which was this :—

Me thinkes it is a thing unfit,
To see a gridiron turne the spit.

The people laughed at this, thinking his wit knew no answer thereunto, which angered Tarlton exceedingly, and presently with a smile looking about, when they expected wonders, he put it off thus :—

Methinkes it is a thing unfit,
To see an asse have any wit.

The people hooted for joy, to see the theame giver dasht, who, like a dog with his taile betweene his legs, left the place. But such commendations Tarlton got, that hee supt with the bailiffe that night, where my theamer durst not come, although he were sent for, so much he vexed at that unlookt for answer.

Tarlton's answer in defence of his flat nose.¹

I remember I was once at a play in the country, where, as Tarlton's use was, the play being done, every one so pleased to throw up his theame: amongst all the rest, one was read to this effect, word by word :—

Tarlton, I am one of thy friends, and none of thy foes.
Then I prethee tell how cam'st by thy flat nose :
Had I beene present at that time on those banks,
I would have laid my short sword over his long shankes.

¹ This peculiarity in Tarlton's face is often alluded to, and his portraits generally mark it admirably. See the one in the Harl. MS. which has been engraved by Mr. Shaw.

Tarlton mad at this question, as it was his property sooner to take such a matter ill then well, very suddenly returned him this answe're:—

Friend or foe, if thou wilt needs know,
 Marke me well :
 With parting dogs and bears, then, by the ears,
 This chance fell :
 But what of that ?
 Though my nose be flat,
 My credit to save,
 Yet very well, I can by the smell,
 Scent an honest man from a knave.

Tarlton's jest of a Bristow man.

When the queenes players were restrained in summer, they travelled downe to S. James his faire at Bristow, where they were worthily entertained both of Londoners and those cittizens. It hapned that a wealthy citizen, called M. Sunbanke, one morning secretly married his maid ; but not so secret but it was blowne abroad. That morning Tarlton and others walking in the faire to visit his familiar friends of London, and beeing in company of Bristow men, they did see M. Sunbanke comming, who had his property with his necke, not to stirre it any way but to turne body and all. It chanced at the faire end hee stood to . . . against a wall : to whome Tarlton came, and clapping him on the shoulder, God give you joy of your marriage, saies he. M. Sunbanke, being taken . . . against the wall, would have looked back to thank him, and suddenly turnes about, body and all, in the view of many, and shewed all : which so abasht him that (ashamed) hee tooke into a taverne, protesting that he had rather have spent ten pound. Sure, said the vintner, the fault is in your necke, which will not turn without the bodies assistance, and not in M. Tarlton.

Call you him M. Tarlton? saies M. Sunbanke. Yea, sir, sayes the vintner, he is the queenes jester. He may be whose jester hee will bee, but this jest agrees not with me at this time, saies M. Sunbanke.¹

A jest broke of Tarlton by a country gentleman.

In the country where the queenes plaiers were accepted into a gentleman's house, the waggon unlading of the apparell, the wagoner comes to Tarlton, and doth desire him to speake to the steward for his horses. I will, saies he: and comming to the steward, Sir, saies Tarlton, where shall our horses spend the time? The gentleman looking at Tarlton at that question, suddenly answered, If it please you, or them, let them walke a turne or two, or there is a faire garden; let them play a game or two at bowles in the alley: and departs thence about his other businesse. Tarlton, commending the sudden wit of the steward, saith little. But my steward, not quiet, tels to the gentlewomen above how he had driven Tarlton to a non plus with a jest, whereat they all did laugh heartily: which a servingman loving Tarlton wel ran and told him as much. Tarlton, to adde fuell to the fire, and loth to rest thus put off with a jest, goes and gets two of the horses into the garden, and turnes them into the bowling alley, who with their heeles made havock, being the gentleman's only pastime. The ladies above from a window, seeing horses in the garden alley, call the knight, who cries out to Tarlton, Fellow, what meanest thou? Nothing, sir, sayes he, but two of my horses are at seven up for a peck of provender, a foolish match that I made. Now they being in play at bowles, run, run, your steward may come after and cry rub, rub; at which though they smiled, yet the steward had no thanks for his labour, to set the horses to such an exercise,

¹ This is an old story, which is found not unfrequently in French and English Jest-books.

and they could not blame Tarlton, who did but as he was bidden. But by this jest oates and hay, stable roome and all, was plenty.

*How Tarlton made one of his company utterly forswear
drunkennesse.*

At Salisbury, Tarlton and his fellowes were to play before the maior and his brethren : but one of his company, a young man, was so drunke that he could not : whereat Tarlton, as mad angry as he was mad drunk, claps me on his legs a huge paire of bolts. The fellow, dead asleepe, felt nothing. When all was done, they conveyed him to the jaile on a mans back, and intreated the jailer to doe God good service, and let him lye there till he waked. While they were about their sport the fellow waked, and, finding himselfe in durance, and the jaile hung round with bolts and shackles, he began to blesse himselfe, and thought sure in his drunkennesse hee had done some mischief. With that hee called to know, but none came to him : then hee thought verily his fault was capitall, and that hee was close prisoner. By and by comes the keeper, and moaned him that one so young should come to so shamefull a death as hanging. Anon another comes, and another with the like, which further put him in a puzzle. But at last comes Tarlton and others, intreating the keeper, yet if it might bee, that they might see their fellow ere they went. But hee very hardly was intreated. But at length the poore drunken Signior cald out for them. In they come. Oh, Tom, sayes Tarlton, hard was thy hap, in drunkennesse to murder this honest man, and our hard hap too, to have it reported any of our company is hang'd for it. O God, O God, saies the fellow, is my fault so great? then commend me to all my friends. Well, short tale to make, the fellow forswore drunkennesse, if hee could escape ; and by as cunning a wile (to his thinking) they got him out of prison by an escape, and sent him to London before,

who was not a little glad to be gone. But see how this jest wrought: by little and little the fellow left his excessive drinking, and in time altered his desire of drunkenness.

How Tarlton saved his head from cutting off.¹

Tarlton upon a time being in the country, and lodging in an homely inne, during which time there was a gentleman dwelling in the same towne some what franticke and distraught of his wits: which mad man on a sudden rusht into Tarlton's bed-chamber with his sword drawne, and, finding him there in bed, would have slaine him, saying, Villaine, were it not valiantly done to strike off thy knave's head at one blow? Tarlton answered, Tut, sir, that's nothing with your worship to doe: you can as easily strike off two heads at one blow as one; wherefore, if you please, Ile goe downe and call up another, and so you may strike off both our heads at once. The madman beleevd him, and so let him slip away.

How Tarlton escaped imprisonment.

Tarlton having been domineering very late one night with two of his friends, and comming homewards along Cheapside, the watch being then set, M. Constable asked, Who goes there? Three merry men, quoth Tarlton. That is not sufficient. What are you? qd. M. Constable. Why, saies Tarlton, one of us is an eye-maker, and the other a light-maker. What saiest thou, knave, doest mocke mee? the one is an eye-maker, the other a light-maker, which two properties belong unto God only. Commit these blasphemers, quoth the constable. Nay, I pray you, good M. Constable, be good in your office. I will

¹ Aubrey, in his Nat. Hist. of Wilts, MS. in the library of the Royal Society, tells a somewhat similar anecdote of a stratagem that Sir Thomas More employed to get rid of a bedlam-beggar, through whom he was in danger of his life.

approve what I have said to be true, qd. Tarlton. If thou canst, saies the constable, you shall passe, otherwise you shall be all three punished. Why, qd. Tarlton, this fellow is an ey-maker, because a spectacle-maker; and this other a maker of light, because a chandler, that makes your darkest night as light as your lanthorn. The constable seeing them so pleasant was well contented. The rest of the watchmen laughed, and Tarlton with his two companions went home quietly.

How Tarlton deceived a country wench.

The queens players travelling into the West Country to play, and lodging in a little village some ten miles from Bristow, in which village dwelt a pretty nut-browne lasse, to whome Tarlton made proffer of marriage, protested that he came from London purposely to marry her. The simple maid, being proud to bee beloved by such a one, whom she knew to be the queenes man, without more intreatie yeelded: and being both at the church together, and M. Parson ready to performe his duty, and comming to the words of I, Richard, take thee, Joane: nay, stay, good Master Parson, I will go and call my fellowes, and come to you again: so going out of the church in haste, he returned at leasure: for, having his horse ready saddled, he rode toward Bristow, and by the way told his fellowes of his successe with his wench.

How Tarlton went to kill crows.

It chanced upon a time, as Tarlton went foorth with a birding peace into the fields to kill crows, hee spied a daw sitting in a tree, at which he meant to shoot; but at the same instant there came one by, to whome hee spake in this manner: Sir, quoth he, yonder I see a daw, which I shoot at if she sit. If she sit, said the other, then she is a daw indeed. But, quoth

Tarlton, if shee sit not, what is she then? Marry, quoth the other, a daw, also: at which words she immediately flew away: whereupon Tarlton spake merrily a rime as followeth:—

Whether a daw sit, or whether a daw fly,
 Whether a daw stand, or whether a daw lye,
 Whether a daw creepe, or whether a daw cry,
 In what case soever a daw persever,¹
 A daw is a daw, and a daw shall be ever.

How a poore begger-man over-reached Tarlton by his wit.

As Tarlton upon a day sate at his owne doore, to him came a poore old man and begged a peny for the Lord's sake: whereupon Tarlton, having no single money about him, askt the begger what mony he had. No more mony, master, but one single peny. Tarlton, being merrily disposed, called for his peny, and, having received it, gave it to his boy to fetch a pot of ale: whereat the begger grew blanke, and began to gather up his wits how to get it againe. The pot of ale, for the begger's peny, being brought, he proffered to drinke to the begger. Nay, stay a while, master, quoth the begger. The use is, where I was borne, that hee that payes for the drink must drink first. Thou saist well, quoth Tarlton; goe to, drink to me, then. Whereupon the begger tooke the pot, saying, Here, Master, I drink to you, and therewithall dranke it off every drop. Now, master, if you will pledge me, send for it, as I have done. Tarlton, seeing himself so over-reacht, greatly commended the begger's wit, and withall, in recompence thereof, gave him a teaster.² With that, the begger said that hee would most truly pray to God for him. No, answered Tarlton, I pray thee pray for thy selfe, for I take no usury for almes-deeds.

¹ Persevere. Persever is the old form, with the accent on the penult.

² Sixpence.

Of Tarlton's pleasant answer to a gallant by the high-way side.

It was Tarlton's occasion, another time, to ride into Suffolk, being furnished with a very leane, large horse ; and by the way a lusty gallant met him, and in mockage asked him, what a yard of his horse was worth. Marry, sir, quoth Tarlton, I pray you alight, and lift up my horses taile, and they in that shop will tell you the price of a yard.

How Tarlton would have drowned his wife.

Upon a time, as Tarlton and his wife, as passengers, came sailing from Southampton, towards London, a mighty storme arose, and endangered the ship ; whereupon, the captaine thereof charged every man to throw into the seas the heaviest thing hee could best spare, to the end to lighten some-what the ship. Tarlton, that had his wife there, offered to throw her over-board ; but the company rescued her ; and being asked wherefore he meant so to doe, he answered, She is the heaviest thing I have, and I can best spare her.¹

How Tarlton made his will and testament.

Of late there was a gentleman living in England, that wheresoever he dined, would of every dish convey a modicum thereof into his gowne sleeve ; which gentleman being upon a time at dinner at a gentleman's house in the country, there he used his aforesaid quality in the company of Master Tarlton, who, perceiving it, said thus unto the company : My masters, I am now determind, before you all, to make my last will and testament : and first, I bequeath my soule to God, my Creator, and my body to be buried in the sleeve of yonder gentleman's gowne : and with that, stepping to him, he turned up the gowne

¹ This is an old jest, perhaps only fathered on Tarlton.

sleeve, whereout here dropt a bit, and there a bit, with choice of much other good cheere, still shaking it, saying, I meant this sleeve, gentlemen, this sleeve I meant.

How Tarlton called a gentleman knave by craft.

Within a while after, as the same gentleman and Tarlton passed thorow a field together, a crow in a tree cried kaw, kaw. See yonder, Tarlton, quoth the gentleman, yonder crow calleth thee knave. No, sir, he answered, he beckens to your worship as the better man.

Tarlton jest of a country wench.

Tarlton, going towards Hogsdon, met a country maid comming to market, her mare stumbling, downe shee fell over and over, shewing all ; and then, rising up againe, she turned her round about unto Master Tarlton, and said : God's body, sir, did you ever see the like before ? No, in good sooth, quoth Tarlton ; never but once, in London.

How Tarlton deceived an inna-holder at Sandwich.

Upon a time, when the plaiers were put to silence, Tarlton and his boy frolickt so long in the countrey, that all their money was gone ; and, beeing a great way from London, they knew not what to doe ; but, as want is the whetstone of wit, Tarlton gathered his conceits together, and practised a trick to beare him up to London without money ; and thus it was : unto an inne in Sandwich they went, and there lay for two daies at great charge, although he had no money to pay for the same : the third morning, he bade his man goe downe, and male-content himself before his host and his hostesse, and, mumbling, say to himself, Lord, Lord, what a scald master doe I serve ! this it is to serve such seminary priests and

jesuites : ¹ now, even as I am an honest boy, He leave him in the lurch, and shift for my selfe : heres ado about penance and mortification ; as though, forsooth, Christ had not dyed enough for all. The boy mumbled out these his instructions, so dissembling, that it strooke a jealousy in the inne-holder's heart that, out of doubt, his master was a seminarie priest ; whereupon, he presently sent for the constable, and told him all the foresaid matter, and so went up both together to attacke Tarlton in his chamber, who purposely had shut himself close in, and betaken him to his knees and to his crosses, to make the matter seeme more suspicious ; which they espying through the keyhole, made no more adoe, but in they rushed, and arrested him for a seminarie priest, discharged his score, bore his and his boyes charges up to London, and there, in hope to have rich rewards, presented him to M. Fleetwood,² the old recorder of London ; but now marke the jest : when the recorder saw Tarlton, and knew him passing well, entertained him very courteously, and all to befool the inne-holder and his mate, and sent them away with fleas in their eares. But when Tarlton sawe himselfe discharged out of their hands, he stood jesting and pointing at their folly, and so taught them by cunning more wit and thrift against another time.

Of Tarlton's wrongfull accusation.

Upon a time, Tarlton was wrongfully accused for getting of a gentleman's maid with child, and for the same brought before a justice in Kent, which justice said as followeth : It is a meruaile, M. Tarlton, that you, being a gentleman of good qualitie, and one of her majesties servants, would venture thus to get

¹ Seminary priests and jesuits were sent over by the catholics to spread sedition against Elizabeth's government, and were treated in consequence with great severity.

² See Hobson's Jests, 1607, reprint p. 40.

maidens with child. Nay, rather, quoth Tarlton, were it marvell, if a maid had gotten me with child.

Tarlton deceived by a country wench.

Tarlton travelling to play abroad, was in a towne where, in the inne, was a pretty maid, whose favour was placed in a corner of Tarlton's affection : and talking with her, shee appoynted to meet him at the bottom of a paire of staires. Night and the houre came, and the maid subtly sent downe her mistresse ; whome Tarlton catching in his armes, Art come, wench ? saies hee. Out, alas, sayes the mistres, not knowing who it was. Tarlton, hearing it was the mistris, start aside, and the maid came downe with a candle, and she espyed a glimpse of Tarlton in the darke, who stept into another roome. How now, mistres ? said the maid. Something, said shee, affrighted me ; some man, sure, for I heard him speake. No, no, mistresse, said the maid ; it is no man ; it was a bull calf that I shut into a roome till John, our pounder, came to have pounded him for a stray. Had I thought that, saith she, I would have hit him such a knocke on his forehead that his horne should never have grac'd his coxcombe ; and so she departs up againe, afraid. But how Tarlton tooke this jest, think you.¹

How Tarlton could not abide a cat, and deceived himselfe.

In the country, Tarlton told his oastesse he was a conjuror. O, sir, sayes she, I had pewter stolne off my shelve the other day ; help me to it, and I will forgive you all the pots of ale you owe mee, which is sixteene dozen. Sayes Tarlton, To morrow morning the divell shall helpe you to it, or I will trounce him. Morning came, and the oastesse and he met in a roome by themselves. Tarlton, to passe the time with exer-

¹ I believe this story is much older than the time of Tarlton.

cise of his wit, with circles and tricks falls to conjure, having no more skill then a dogge. But see the jest, how contrarily it fell out : as he was calling out, mons, pons, simul, and sons, and such like, a cat, unexpected, leapt from the gutter window ; which sight so amazed Tarlton, that he skipt thence and threw his hostesse downe, so that he departed with his fellowes, and left her hip out of joynt, being then in the surgeons hands, and not daring to tell how it came.

How Tarlton and his oastesse of Waltham met.

Tarlton, riding with divers cittizens, his friends, to make merry at Waltham, by the way he met with his oastesse, riding toward London, whome hee of old acquaintance saluted. Shee demands whither they went. Tarlton told her, to make merry at Waltham. Sir, saies shee, then let me request your company at my house, at the Christopher, and, for old familiarity, spend your money there. Not unlesse you goe backe, saies Tarlton. We will else goe to the Hound. But she, loth to lose their custome, sent to London by her man, and goes back with them ; who by the way had much mirth, for she was an exceeding merry honest woman, yet would take anything : which Tarlton hearing, as wise as he was, thinking her of his minde, he was deceived : yet he askt her if the biggest bed in her house were able to hold two of their bignesse ; meaning himself and her. Yes, saies she, and tumble up and downe at pleasure. Yea, one upon another, saies Tarlton. And under, to, saies she. Well, to have their custome, she agreed to everything, like a subtill oastesse : and it fell so out that Tarlton, having her in a roome at her house, askt her which of those two beds were big enough for them two. This, said she : therefore, goe to bed, sweet-heart, Ile come to thee. Masse, saies Tarlton, were my bootes off, I would, indeed. Ile help you, sir, saies she, if you please. Yea, thought Tarlton, is the wind in that doore ? Come on, then. And she very diligently

begins to pull, till one boot was half off. Now, saies she, this being hard to doe, let me try my cunning on the other, and so get off both. But, having both half off his legs, she left him alone in the shoemakers stocks, and got her to London, where Tarlton was three houres, and had no help.¹ But, being eas'd of his paine, he made this ryme for a theame, singing of it all the way to London :—

Women are wanton, and hold it no sinne,
By tricks and devices to pull a man in.

Tarlton's meeting with his country acquaintance at Ilford.

On a Sunday, Tarlton rode to Ilford, where his father kept;² and, dining with them at his sisters, there came in divers of the country to see him, amongst whom was one plaine country plough-jogger, who said hee was of Tarlton's kin, and so called him cousin. But Tarlton demanded of his father if it were so. But he knew no such matter. Whereupon, saies Tarlton, whether he be of my kin or no, I will be cousin to him ere we part, if all the drinke in Ilford will doe it. So upon this they carouse freely, and the clowne was then in his cue, so that, in briefe, they were both in soundly. Night came, and Tarlton would not let his cousin goe, but they would lye together that night, meaning to drinke at their departure next morning. Tarlton would by wit leave him in the lash, since power would not. But see the jest. That night the plaine fellow so Tarlton in his bed, thinking he had been against the church wal, that he was faine to cry for a fresh shirt to shift him. So, when al was well, they must needs drinke at parting: where, indeed, to seale kindred soundly, the fellow had his loade; for, hearing that his cousin Tarlton was gone to London, Zounds,

¹ This is a very old story, and occurs frequently. It is also the subject of a ballad.

² Lived. The term is still in use at the Universities.

he would follow, that he would, none could hold him ; and, meaning to goe towards London, his aime was so good, that he went towards Rumford to sell his hogs.

How a maid drove Tarlton to a non-plus.¹

* * * * *

Tarlton's ansuere to a question.

One asked Tarlton why Munday was called Sundaies fellow ? Because he is a sausie fellow, saies Tarlton, to compare with that holy day. But it may be Munday thinkes himsefe Sundayes fellow, because it followes Sunday, and is next after : but he comes a day after the faire for that. Nay, saies the fellow, but if two Sundayes fall together, Munday then may be the first, and it would shew well too. Yes, saies Tarlton, but if thy nose stood under thy mouth, it would shew better, and be more for thy profit. How for my profit, said the fellow ? Marry, said Tarlton, never to be cold in winter, being so neere every dogs taile. The fellow seeing a foolish question had a foolish ansuere, laid his legges on his neck, and got him gone.

Tarlton's desire of enough for money.

Tarlton comming into a market towne bought oates for his horse, and desired enough for money : the man said, You shall, sir, and gave him two halfe pecks for one. Tarlton thought his horse should that night fare largely, and comes to him with this rime :—

Jack Nag, be brag, and lustie brave it,
I have enough for mony, and thou shalt have it.

¹ This is a common jest, long before the time of Tarlton. It is found in some of the early French story-books. I have omitted this anecdote for the same reason that I have cancelled another at p. 7.

But when Jack Nag smelt to them they were so musty that he would none : God thanke you, master : which Tarlton seeing, runnes into the Market, and would slash and cut. But til the next market day the fellow was not to be found, and before then Tarlton must be gone.

How Tarlton's dogge lickt up six-pence.

Tarlton in his travaile had a dogge of fine qualities ; amongst the rest, he would carry sixpence in the end of his tongue, of which he would brag often, and say, Never was the like. Yes, saies a lady, mine is more strange, for he will beare a French crowne in his mouth. No, saies Tarlton, I thinke not. Lend me a French crowne, saies the lady, and you shall see. Truly, madame, I have it not, but if your dog will carry a crackt English crowne here it is. But the lady perceived not the jest, but was desirous to see the dogs trick of sixpence. Tarlton threw down a teaster, and said, Bring, sirra, and by fortune the dog took up a counter, and let the money lie. A gentlewoman by, seeing that, askt him how long he would hold it ? An heure, saies Tarlton. That is pretty, said the gentlewoman, let's see that. Meane time she tooke up the sixe-pence, and willed him to let them see the money againe ; when he did see it it was a counter, and he made this rime :—

Alas, alas, how came all this to passe ?
The world's worse than it was ;
For silver turns to brasse.

I, saies the lady, and the dog hath made his master an asse. But Tarlton would never trust to his dogs tricks more.

Tarlton's jest of a horse and man.

In the city of Norwich, Tarlton was on a time invited to an hunting, where there was a goodly gentlewoman, that bravely

mounted on a blacke horse, rode exceeding well, to the wonder of all the beholders ; and neither hedge nor ditch stood in her way, but Pegasus, her horse, for so may we tearme him for swiftnesse, flew over all, and she sate him as well. When every one returned home, some at supper commended his hound, others his hawke, and shee above all, her horse. And, said she, I love no living creature so well, at this instant, as my gallant horse. Yes, lady, a man better, saies Tarlton. Indeed no, said shee, not now ; for since my last husband dyed I hate them most, unlesse you can give me medicines to make me love them. Tarlton made this jest instantly :—

Why, a horse mingeth whay, madam, a man mingeth amber,
A horse is for your way, madam, but a man for your chamber.

God a mercy, Tarlton, said the men : which the gentlewoman noting, seeing they tooke exceptions at her words, to make all well, answered thus :—

That a horse is my chiefe opinion now, I deny not,
And when a man doth me more good in my chamber I him
defie not.

But till then give me leave to love something. Then something will please you, said Tarlton, I am glad of that, therefore I pray God send you a good thing or none at all.

Tarlton's talke with a pretty woman.

Gentlewoman, said Tarlton, and the rest as you sit, I cau tell you strange things : now many gallants at supper noted one woman, who being little and pretty, to unfit her prettinesse had a great wide mouth, which she seeming to hide, would pinch in her speeches, and speake small, but was desirous to heare newes. Tarlton told at his comming from London to Norwich, a proclamation was made that every man should have two wives.

Now Jesus, qd. she, is it possible? I¹ gentlewoman, and otherwise able too, for contrarily women have a larger pre-eminence, for every woman must have three husbands. Now Jawsus, said the gentlewoman, and with wonder shewes the full wideness of her mouth, which all the table smil'd at; which she perceiving, would answer no more. Now mistris, said Tarlton, your mouth is lesse than ever it was, for now it is able to say nothing. Thou art a cogging knave, said she. Masse, and that is something, yet, said Tarlton, your mouth shall be as wide as ever it was for that jest.

A jest of Tarlton to a great man.

There was a great huge man, three yards in the wast, at S. Edmondsbury, in Suffolk, that died but of late daies, one M. Blague, by name, and a good kinde justice, too, carefull for the poore: this justice met with Tarlton in Norwich; Tarlton, said he, give me thy hand. But you, sir, being richer, may give me a greater gift, give me your body, and embracing him, could not halfe compasse him. Being merry in talke, said the justice, Tarlton, tell me one thing, what is the difference betwixt a flea and a louse? Marry, sir, said Tarlton, as much and like difference as twixt you and me: I, like a flea, see else, can skip nimbly, but you, like a fat louse, creepe slowly, and you can go no faster, though butchers are over you, ready to knock you on the head. Thou art a knave, quoth the justice. I, sir, I knew that, ere I came hither, else I had not been here now, for ever one knave, making a stop, seekes out another. The justice, understanding him, laughed heartily.

Tarlton's jest to a maid in the dark.

Tarlton going in the darke, groping out his way, heares the tread of some one to meet him. Who goes there, saies he, a

¹ It is almost unnecessary to observe that *I* here is the affirmative *Ay*.

man or a monster? Said the maid, a monster. Said Tarlton, a candle hoe; and seeing who it was, Indeed, said he, a monster, I'll be sworne, for thy teeth are longer than thy beard. O, sir, said the maid, speake no more then you see, for women goe invisible now adayes.

Tarlton's jest to a dogge.

Tarlton and his fellowes, being in the Bishop of Worcester's sellar, and being largely laid to, Tarlton had his rouse, and going through the streets, a dogge, in the middle of the street, asleep on a dunghill, seeing Tarlton reele on him, on the sodaine barkt. How now, dog, saies Tarlton, are you in your humours? and many daies after it was a by-word to a man being drunke, that he was in his humours.¹

¹ See an apposite quotation by Steevens, from "Humor's Ordinarie," 1607, in Malone's Shakespeare, ed. 1821, vol. viii., p. 65.



TARLTON'S
NEWS OUT OF PURGATORY.

Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie. Onelye such a jest as his Jigge, fit for Gentlemen to laugh at an houre, &c. Published by an old companion of his, Robin Goodfellow. 4to.

Without date, but "printed for Edward White," in or before 1590; for in that year appeared an answer to it, under the title of "The Cobler of Caunterbury," which the reader will find more particularly noticed in the Introduction to this work. Another edition was published in 1630, which is merely a reprint, with some unimportant variations, and a few blunders, a whole line being omitted in the address to the "gentlemen readers." This tract was entered at Stationers' Hall on June 26th, 1590, under the following title: "Tarltons newes out of Purgatorye, or a caskett full of pleasaunt conceptes, stuffed with delightfull devise and quaint myrthe, as his humour maye afoorde, to feede gentlemens fancies."

TO THE GENTLEMEN READERS, HEALTH.

Gentlemen, the horse when hee is firste handled to the warres, starteth at the crack of every peece ; and every coucht lance is a censure of death to a freshe water souldier. So fareth it with mee ; for, never before beeing in print, I start at the sight of the presse, and having not dared to look into the open light, I feared with the owle to flye before it be twy-light : yet I have heard others, whose bookes have past your viewe, account you so favourable, curteous, and affable, shrouding every scape¹ with silence, that I presumed the rather to experience with them the hope of your favours ; which, if I finde, as they haue doon, though I be blinde Bayard,² yet I will in the thickest of the mire plunge up to the saddle for your sakes. Virgill, after he wrot his *Aeneidos*³ wrote his *Culex*, and assaid in trifles before he attempted in triumphes. Lucan wrot *quædam lirica*, before he began with *Bella*⁴ *per Emathios plus-*

¹ A piece of negligence.

² Bayard was originally the name for a bay horse, but usually applied to a horse in general. The proverb of "blind Bayard," here alluded to, is the very reverse of the maxim "look before you leap." So Chaucer:—

"Ye ben as bold as is *Bayard the blind*,

That blondereth forth, and peril casteth non."

Cant. T., 16881.

³ That is, the *Æneis*. This was a common mistake in early writers. The *Culex* is printed in *Virgilio Appendix, cum Jos. Scaligeri comment. et castigationibus*, 8vo. Lugd., 1573, and elsewhere.

⁴ The early edition reads "bellum," which is corrected to "bella" in the impression of 1630. "Quædam lirica" is the same in both copies. The *Pharsalia* had not at this time been translated into English.

quam civilia campos: Roome was not builded on a day,¹ and men that venture little hazard little. So, gentlemen, I present you with a toy of Tarltons, called his Newes out of Purgatory, which I desire you to accept as curteously as I offer willing to please: thogh they be *crepundia*, yet reade them, and if you finde any pleasant *facetiae* or *quicquid satis*, thinke all savorye, and so pleasde without being satirically peremptorye; for Momus will have a mouth full of invectives, and Zoilus should not be Zoilus, if hee were not squint eyde. Therefore leaving

their humours to the wordmongers
of malice, that like the vipers,
grew odious to their own
kinde, hoping of your
curteous censure²
I bid you
farewell.

¹ "Builded" for "built" is not uncommon, and the same proverb occurs in *The French Alphabet*, 12mo., Lond, 1615, p. 18.

² Opinion. This use of the word is very frequent. See *Nares* in v.

TARLTONS
NEWES OUT OF PURGATORY.

Sorrowing, as most men doo, for the death of Richard Tarlton, in that his particular losse was a generall lament to all that coveted either to satisfie their eies with his clownish gesture, or their ears with his witty jestes. The woonted desire to see plaies left me in that although I saw as rare showes, and heard as lofty verse, yet I injoyed not those wonted sports that flowed from him, as from a fountaine of pleasing and merry conceits. For although he was only superficially seene in learning, having no more but a bare insight into the Latin tung, yet he had such a prompt wit, that he seemed to have that *salet ingenij*, which Tullie so highly commends in his *Oratorie*.¹ Well, howsoever, either naturall or artificiall, or both, he was a mad merry companion, desired and loved of all, amongst the rest of whose wel wishers myselfe, being not the least, after his death I mourned in conceite, and absented myselfe from all plaies, as wanting that merrye Roscius of plaiers, that famosed² all comedies so with his pleasant and extemporall invention; yet at last, as the longest sommers day hath his night, so

¹ Lib. i., c. 25.

² Made celebrated.

this dumpe had an end : and forsooth upon Whitson monday last I would needs to the Theatre ¹ to a play, where when I came, I founde such concourse of unrulye people,² that I thought it better solitary to walk in the fields, then to intermeddle my-selfe amongst such a great presse. Feeding mine humour with this fancie I stept by dame Anne of Cleeres well, and went by the backside of Hogsdon, where, finding the sun to be hotte, and seeing a faire tree that had a coole shade, I sat me downe to take the aire, where after I had rested me a while, I fell asleepe. As thus I lay in a slumber, me thought I sawe one attired in russet, with a buttond cap on his head, a great bag by his side, and a strong bat in his hand, so artificially attired for a clowne as I began to call Tarltons woonted shape³ to remembrance, as he drew more neere and he came within the compasse of mine eie, to judge it was no other but the verye ghoast of Richard Tarlton, which pale and wan, sat him down by me on the grasse. I that knew him to be dead, at this sodaine sight fell into a great feare, in somuch that I sweat in my sleep ; which he perceiving, with his woonted countenance full of smiles, began to comfort me thus : What, olde acquaintance, a man or a mouse ? Hast thou not heard me verefie, that a souldier is a souldier if he have but a blew hose on his head ?

¹ A playhouse so called, situated in Shoreditch. See Collier's *Hist. Dram. Poet.*, vol. iii., p. 263 ; and Northbroke's *Treatise*, repr., p. 85. In Nash's *Pierce Penilesse*, p. 44, Tarlton is mentioned as playing there.

² "And lette Tarleton intreate the yoong people of the cittie either to abstaine altogether from playes, or, at their comming thither to use themselves after a more quiet order. In a place so civill as this cittie is esteemed, it is more than barbarously rude to see the shamefull disorder and routes that sometime in such publike meetings are used."—*Kind-Harts Dreame*, 1592.

³ This very nearly agrees with the description given by Chettle :—"the next, by his sute of russet, his buttond cap, his taber, his standing on the toe, and other tricks, I knew to be either the body or resemblaunce of Tarlton, who living, for his pleasant conceits was of all men liked, and dying, for mirth left not his like."—*Kind-Harts Dreame*, 1592.

feare not me, man, I am but Dick Tarlton, that could quaint it in the court, and clowne it on the stage ; that had a quarte of wine for my freend, and a sword for my foe, who hurt none being alive, and will not prejudice any being dead : for although thou see me heere in likenes of a spirite, yet thinke me to bee one of those *Familiares Lares* that were rather pleasantly disposed then endued with any hurtfull influence, as Hob Thrust, Robin Goodfellow¹ and such like spirites, as they tearme them of the buttry, famozed in every olde wives chronicle for their mad merrye pranks. Therefore sith my appearance to thee is in a resemblance of a spirite, think that I am as pleasant a goblin as the rest, and will make thee as merry before I part, as ever Robin Goodfellow made the cuntry wenches at their Cream-boules. With this he drewe more neere me, and I, starting backe, cried out :—*In nomine Jesu*, avoid Sathan, for ghost thou art none, but a very divell, for the soules of them which are departed, if the sacred principles of theologie be true, never returne into the world againe till the generall resurrection, for either are they plast² in heaven, from whence they come not to intangle themselues with other cares, but sit continuallye before the seat of the Lambe, singing Alleluia³ to the highest ; or else they are in hell. And this is a profound and certain aphorisme, *Ab inferis nulla est redemptio*. Upon these conclusive premises, depart from me, Sathan, the resemblance of whomsoever thou doost carrye. At this, pitching his staffe downe on the end, and crossing one leg over another, he answered thus :—why you horson dunce, think you to set Dick Tarlton *non plus* with your aphorismes ? no, I have yet left one chapter

¹ “If he be no *Hob-thrust* nor no *Robin Goodfellow*, I could finde with all my heart to sip up a sillybub with him.”—*The Two Lancashire Lovers*, 1640, p. 222. I need only refer to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the notes of the commentators upon that play. The passage in the text has been often quoted.

² Placed.

³ Revelation, c. xix.

of choplodgick¹ to tewslite² you withall, that were you as good as George à Greene³ I would not take the foile at your hands, and that is this, I perceive by your arguments your inward opinion, and by your wise discretion what pottage you love: I see no sooner a rispe⁴ at the house end or a maipole⁵ before the doore, but I cry there is a paltry alehouse: and as soon as I heare the principles of your religion, I can saye, Oh, there is a Calvinist; what doo you make heaven and hell *contraria immediata* — so contrarie, that there is no meane betwixt them, but that either a mans soule must in post haste goe presently to God, or else with a whirlwind and a vengeance goe to the divell! yes, yes, my good brother, there is *quoddam tertium*, a third place that all our great grandmothers have talkt of, that Dant hath so learnedly writ of, and that is purgatorie. What, sir, are we wiser then all our forefathers? and they not onlye feared that place in life, but found it after their death: or els was there much land and annuall pensions given in vaine to morrowe-masse priests for dirges, trentals and such like decretals of devotion, whereby the soules in purgatorie were the sooner advanced into the quiet estate of heaven? Nay, more, how many popes and holy bishops of Rome whose cannons cannot erre, have taught us what this purgatory is: and yet if thou wert so incredulous that thou wouldest neither beleewe our olde beldames, nor the good Bishops: yet take Dick

¹ "Will you chop with me? *voulez vous troquer avec moi?* or thus, in a burlesk sense, as to chop logick with one, *disputer avec quécun.*"—*Miege.*

² To perplex.

³ An allusion to the old play of "George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield," 1599, ascribed by some to Robert Greene; or the old prose history upon which that play is founded. Of the latter there is an early copy in MS. in the library of Sion College, which has escaped the notice of the editors of these two pieces.

⁴ A branch.

⁵ The ale-stake, frequently explained a may-pole in the old glossaries.

Tarlton once for thine authour, who is now come from purgatory, and if any upstart Protestant deny, if thou hast no place of Scripture ready to confirme it, say as Pithagoras schollers did (*ipse dixit*) and to all bon companions it shall stand for a principle. I could not but smile at the madde merrye doctrine of my freend Richard, and therefore taking hart at grasse,¹ drawing more neere him, I praied him to tell me what Purgatory is, and what they be that are resident there; as one willing to doo me such a favour, he sat him downe, and began thus :—

¹ That is, being resolute. The phrase is still used in Warwickshire, as I find from a MS. list of provincial words kindly sent me by Mr. W. Reader.

TARLTON'S DESCRIPTION OF PURGATORY.

After thy breath hath left thy bodye, and thy soule is set free from this vile prison of earth, where it hath been long inclosed, then doth it wander forward into a faire broade waye, where at the turning of a crosse there are three passages, one on the right hand, and that is verye narrowe and leadeth unto heaven. The second, on the left hand, is broard and faire, over a green vale, and that conducteth unto hell: now betwixt these is there a lane neither too broard nor too narrow, and that is the high way to Purgatory, wherin after you have wandred a while, you come to a bridge framed all of needle pointes, and over that must you passe barefooted, as the first penance for your formost offences. Then, sir, to have a little ease after that sharpe absolution, shall you come into a faire medowe, and that is all over growne with *Ave maries* and *Creedes*, this is to put you in remembrance of our Ladies Psalter, which if you can say a hundreth and fiftie times over before you passe the medow, you escape passing over a whole field of hot burning plough shares, that day and night lye glowing hotte for such purposes. After these and many moe¹ of other miseries, which I am by the law forbidden to utter, you come to purgatory gate, where, for an entring penny, you have fortie lashes with a whip as ill as ever where given in Bridewell; then are you admitted entrance. At the first you shall come into a very sumptuous hall richly hanged with tapistrie, so fine and so curious, that the most cuthroate broaker in England would take the woorst of the hangings for a sufficient pawne. In this hall shal you see an infinite number of seates, formed and seated like an amphitheater, wherin are royally, nay more then roally, placed all the Popes, except the first thirtie after Christ, and they went

¹ More.

presently to heaven : and the reason was, because Purgatorie was then but a-building, and not fully finished. In those seates, I say, the Popes sit triumphantly with their pontificalibus, and their triple crowns, but yet abiding paines of purgatorie as well as the meanest in all the house, equallye proportioned according to the measure of their sinnes ; some for false wresting the Scriptures, others for ambition, some for covetousness, gluttonie, extortion, symonye, wrath, pride, envie, many for sloth, and idlenesse, and some I can tell you have come thither for wenching matters ; that's counted in Rome but a veniall sinne, and therfore three dirges and two tapers offered to the picture of olde Pasquille, is sufficient to wipe away so small an offence. But amongst all the rest, two of them made me to marvell at the strangenes of the punishment. The first was Boniface the fourth, and he sat in this order :—

He was richly attired in his pontificalibus, and somewhat more rich then the rest, but upon his head, instead of his triple crowne he wore a dustie miller's cap, and whereas other Popes held in their right hand the keyes of heaven, and in the left the sword of Paule, he helde betweene both his hands a durty maulkin, such as bakers sweepe their ovens withall, and right over his head was written this olde adage in Latin,

Ne sutor ultra crepidam.

And because thou shalt know the reason why he was thus punished, marke this merry tale :

THE TALE OF POPE BONIFACE, AND WHY HE WORE A
MILLERS CAP AND A MALKIN IN PURGATORIE.¹

There dwelled sometime in the citie of Rome a baker, named Astatio, who for his honest behaviour was well accounted

¹ This tale is only another version of the old story of King John and the abbot of Canterbury : it was a popular subject, which occurs under various forms. See Sir F. Madden's *Gesta Romanorum*, p. 508.

of¹ amongst his neighbours, insomuch that what size soever his bread was baked after, his loaves never past the ballance. This Astatio had sundrye prentises and journeyemen to doo his businesse, for he was cheefe baker to the Pope's holinesse : amongst whome there was one called Myles, who was a strong lusty lubber, and one that was as ripe conceived for knaverye, as the miller that ground their meale, for theevery, and had as many good conditions as his mistresse had points of chastitie, and she was thought a vertuous matron ; for a cardinall lay in her house to instruct her with holy sentences, and where such blessed men lye, there can be no lecherie. Well, Myles was a mad wagge, and when he had doone his businesse, to exercise his wits, would divers times resorte to some one or other of the cloister of nuns, amongst these merry wenches, to put in practise the excellencye of his prattle ; he so behaved himselfe, that if higher fortune had not fallen him, the nuns of Santa Maria had intreated their abbesse to have made him their factotum ; but to his greater dignitie thus it fell out. It chaunced that Pope Pius fell sicke, and for that he knew cardinals were ambitious, and would flie with Icarus whatsoever befall, to avoide all mutinies that might insue after his death about the succession of the papacie, he called his cardinals together, and charged them to elect none Pope but he that could absolve these three questions :—

1. *What kinde of men those be that God never made ?*
2. *What creatures those be, that in sight, are carnations, in smell, roses, in hearing, syrens, in touch, nettles, and in taste, wormewood ?*
3. *And what occupations take more paines about God then the pope ?*

Upon these the cardinals were agreede, and went home to their severall lodging, leaving Pius well contented with their mutuall consent, and resolved to dye, sith he had so well determined

¹ Esteemed.

of the succession of¹ the papacy : to be breefe, as every dog hath his day, so the pope had his date, for the nexte morning he died. And upon this there was a generall mourning through all Rome ; the cardinals wept, the abbots howled, the monks rored, the fryers cryed, the nuns puled, the curtizans lamented, the bells rang, and the tapers were lighted, that such a blacke *sanctus* was not seene a long time afore in Rome. Well, to be shorte, his funerals were solemnly kept, and his bodye carryed from Castle Angelo to St Peter's church, and there intombed.

After his death everye one of the cardinals aspiring to the papacie, pondred in his braine the meaning of these questions, but they were not so good schollers that they could either devide, define, or distinguish upon them, especialye Cardinal Montecelso, that laye at the baker's house, who long while had these questions hammering in his head, but to small purpose, for the more he sought the farther off he was, which greeved him ful sore ; for the day was come wherein they must give up their verdict, and the synode of the cardinals appointed to meet. Cardinal Montecelso ashamed to go because he was so monstrous a dunce, knowing that Myles the baker's man was a fellowe of a prompt witte, and withall so like the cardinall, as no man coulde discern the one from the other, brought it so to passe, that he perswaded Myles to goe and heare the questions, and to sit in his roabes amongst the rest of the cardinals, promising, if hee woon the victory by his witte, hee would, when he were pope, so labour that he would make him a cardinall. Myles that was ever malepert, and more saucy then honest, undertooke the matter, and bluntlye over his bakers mealy cassock, for haste, put on the cardinal's habit, and went very solemnly to St. Peter's Church, where the rest of the holy brotherhood sate, taking his place amongst them as Montecelso had directed him.

¹ "O," in the first edition, but the mistake is corrected in the impression of 1630.

When thus they were all gathered together, the eldest of the fraternitie laide open unto them that nowe, by the death of Pius, the papacye stood *sede vacante*: yet, by the good direction of his holynes in his life time, to avoid further controversie in the Church, hee had left a meane to know who should be next succesour in the sea; and thereupon he propounded three questions, which began at the eldest and so *gradatim* went downward. Sundrye men gave sundry verdicts: at last it came to Cardinall Montecelso, who was yongest, to yeelde his reason, which if it were not probable and plausible, the synode must devise some other meanes to know the successor; for the questions were so darke, that amongst the rest they were as inscrutable aenigmaes. Well, to Myles at last came the matter to be made manifest, who very demurely, in his scarlet robes and his grave bonnet, began thus: My lords and fellowe brethren in this dignity, nowe is the text fulfilled: the last shall bee first and the first shall be last: for I that am yongest in yeeres am like to be eldest in judgement; and, being last in degree, am like to be first in dignity. Therefore, you foolish dunces, thus to absolve these three questions:—

What kinde of men be those that God never made.

I tell you they be popes, cardinals, abbots, monks, and priests; for none of all these did God ever make, and thus I prove it: The Creator, both according to the principles of philosophie and theology, is greater then the creature; and it is impossible that the Maker should bee formed or fashioned by the thing made, as a pot to make a potter: is it not, then, as repugnant to reason that God should make a priest, when the preest every daye in his masse maketh God? and so is he the creator, and God the creature: therefore, brethren, the preest is the man God never made; because we ourselves knowe that the preest is God's maker. To this they all applauded, and said, he had spoken as much as Pius meant. Now, quoth he, to the second question,

What creatures those be, that in sight are carnations, in smell, roses, in hearing, syrens, in touching, nettles, and in taste, wormewood.

Thus I answer: they be, my maisters, quoth he, these kinde of cattell that we covet so much to keepe, and these be women: for he that sees a gallant wench, which wee Italians terme *Bona Roba*,¹ with a faire face florisht over with a vermillion blush, shee seemes to his eye as beautifull as a carnation; and her breath that is as sweete and odoriferous as a rose; he that listens to her words shal finde them as pleasant and melodious as the syren, and as full of flattery as Cyrces: so that he that will avoide three wyles, must, with Ulisses, tye himselfe to the mast, or else venture on three dangerous shelves: in touching, they be nettles, for they sting to the quick: and in taste, whosoever tries them shall finde them as bitter in the end as wormewood. When Miles had discourst this, they thought Sphinx himselfe could not have yeilded a better reason; and therefore our gentleman baker went on to the third thus boldly: and now, maisters, quoth he, to the last.

What occupations take more paines about God then the Pope.

Marry, quoth Miles, there be three: the ploughman, the miller, and the baker; and thus I prove it: The ploughman, he takes paines to dresse his feeld, to sow his corne, and in harvest with toyle to reape, in winter to thresh it out with the sweat of his browes. Then it is conveyed from him to the miller, and he bestirs himselfe to set his stones in frame to grinde it: next it is transported to the baker, and he boults it and sifes the bran from the flower, and with great paines makes it into a fine cake, and bakes it: last, it is brought to the pope, and he, when he is at masse, saies but *Hoc est corpus meum*, and it is God; he spends but a little fewe wast words about it; wheras the other three labour long ere they bring it to per-

¹ A courtesan. See Nares, in v.

fection : therefore, these three take more paines about God then the pope. One of the old cardinals hearing this, wondring at his wit, began to repeate over the names of the ploughswaine, the miller, and the baker. Myles, hearing him name the baker, took straight pepper in the nose,¹ and, starting up, threw of his cardinal's roabes, standing in his dustye cassocke, swore I by cockesbread, the baker ; and he that saies to the contrary, heere stand I, Myles, the baker's man, to have the proudest cardinall of you all by the eares.

The cardinals all this while thinking it had been Montecelso, and now seeing it was Myles, the bakers man, to sooth up the matter and cloak their own ignorances, made him pope, and called him, insteade of Myles, Boniface ; where hee soone forgat, being a preest, that ever he was a clarke : in so much that on a day passing to Saint Peter's Church, his maister Astatio met him, and, amongst the rest, did his holynesse great reverence ; but Myles, now that was pope, could not looke so low as a poor baker ; which his maister espying, as he came by, said, that the pope might heare : *Non fuit sic a principio* : no knave, quoth he ; but thou shalt heare song anon, *Sic erit in secula seculorum. Amen.* Thus went the baker's man in solemne procession to S. Peter's Church, and there, after his instalement, hard masse, and so departed home to Castle Angelo. And for that he was advanst from a baker's trough to the papacie, and after grew so proud and insolent that he would not know his old maister, he sits in a miller's dustye cappe, and a baker's malking, to signifie the former pride of his life.

Next him sat Hildebrand, and he held a red hering in his hand, because he made Lent : and one pope sat with a smock sleeve about his necke, and that was he that made the imbering weekes, in honor of his faire and beautifull curtizan Imbra.

A little beyond sat Alexander, who was forst to make cleane rustie armor, that, like Sisiphus stone, had no end ; for, as fast

¹ Was affronted.

as he scowred, the cancker stil fretted that he did, *In Caucasum saxum volvere*:¹ and this was because he was a better souldier then a scholler. Hard by him was Julius, that upon the bridge threw S. Peter's keyes into Tiber, and took him to the sword of Paul; infinit other sundry offences: but such a multitude were plagued for wenching, that of them al there was not one seapt free for that fault, but Urbane the Second, that was instalde pope in the morning and was poysoned before dinner; and yet they question whether, if he had lived that night, his lemon and he had not bidden pennance in purgatorye for their sinnes.

Thus, when I sawe all these stately fellowes, as I was redy to go out of the hal, I spied sitting in a corner a bare faced youth, well featured, of a lively countenance, and a sweete looke, in Pope's attire; but on her head, instead of a myter, shee had a kercher, and in her hand a distaffe. I thought it had been Hercules, that was found playing the wanton so with Omphale, or Sardanapalus amongst his curtizans. But at last I spied it was a pope, or had been a pope; but whether man or woman, or what it was, I could not tell, till I spied written over his head in great characters this stile:—

*Papa, Pater, Parens Patricæ, Prope Portas Petri, Pauli,
Parvum Peperit Puerum.*

Then I perceived it was Pope Joane, that honest woman, that as she went a procession through the Lataran was brought to bed in the streets. I smilde at her attire, and left her to her punishment. Passing from thence, I went into a lower roome, and there were all kings and princes, and men of name, which, for that I might slander their royall tytles, I omit with silence. But thus they were all punished according to their offences, no more spared for their wealth then the poore for their povertye; unlesse they dyed highly in the popes favour; and perhaps there was some indulgence to mittigate their punishment. I left

¹ Ovidii Ibis, 177.

them, and anon I came into a baser roome, all full of monkes and friars. What sinnes I saw there figured forth as I am ashamed to rehearse: onely Friar Onyon, the holy confessour of Florence, hee sate there naked, all annointed with hony, and miserably tormented with waspes. The cause of his punishment I learned to be this:—

THE TALE OF FRIAR ONYON: WHY IN PURGATORY HE
WAS TORMENTED WITH WASPES.¹

There dwelled a widdowe in Florence, of good parentage and large possession, more beautifull then she was wealthy, and yet she was the richest widow in al Florence. Her name was Lisetta: the onely faulte that was found in hir was, that her beautye was more then her wit, and that such a selfe love of her excellencye had made her overweene herselfe, that she thought none fit to bee her husband in all Florence. Thus, though she were looked at for her outward perfection, yet was she laughed at for her inward follyes. Wel, howsoever others censured of her, she thought her pennye better silver then the rest, and would so strive to excell other gentlewomen in the nicenesse of gesture, that oftentimes she marde all, in so much that her coy quaintnesse was a by-woord in the citie. Every weeke, forsooth, because shee would seeme as vertuous as shee was faire, she devoutly went to Friar Onion, to be confessed of her sins. The preest, who was a lustye lubber, and a tall swaine, and nurst up lust with idlenesse, began to looke upon

¹ I do not recollect meeting with this story in any other writer under exactly the same form as here, but it is most probably taken from some Italian or French Collection. The name of Friar Onion is evidently taken from the tale in Boccaccio, *Giorn. vi., nov. 10.* The present tale is in substance the same story as the intrigue between Nectanebo and the mother of Alexander, in the old romance, and which is reproduced under a variety of forms in other medieval tales. It is also found in the Persian tales of M. Petis de la Croix, 1809, i., 330.

her more narrowly, and to take a particular view of her perfections ; with that, entring with a pearcing insight into her selfe-love, thought that shee might quickely bee overreacht in her owne conceiptes ; for he thought that, if the wisest woman were wonne with faire praises and large promises, it were more easie to intrap her with the discourse of her excellencye. Therefore, he laid his plot thus : the next time Lisetta came to shrift, after she had made her confession, and had received absolution for her sinnes, Friar Onyon, looking earnestlye upon her, fetcht a far sigh, and saide : Ah, madam, if you knew as much as I know, as you are the fairest, you would thinke your selfe the happiest of all women that are alive. And why, sir, I pray you ? quoth Lisetta. Ah, said Friar Onyon, it is such a secret as may not be revealed ; for if I should disclose it to you, and you by any means make it manifest, there were no way with me but a most miserable death. Lisetta, as all women be desirous of novelty, was so greedy to heare what good was toward hir, that she made a thousand protestations, and uttered a thousand oathes, never to bewray what her ghostlye father should tell her in secret. Then, madam, quoth Friar Onyon, with a grave and a demure countenance, know your beauty is so excellent, and your perfection so far beyond the common course of all other women, that not only all men that see you admire you as a miracle, but the verye angels in heaven are enamored of your proportion. The angels, quoth she, is that possible ? The angels, madam ; and not the meanest, but the most beautifull of all the rest ; for the Angell Gabriel is so far in love with you, that the other night he appeared unto me, and charged me to do his earnest commendations unto you, with promise that, if he might be assured of your secrecy, hee would at convenient times visit you, and intertaine you with such love as befitteth such holy spirits.

This tale so set a-fire Lysetta, that she not onely thanked Friar Onyon for his commendations, but counted herselfe the most fortunate of all women that shee was beloved of so blessed

a saint ; and, therefore, when and where it pleased him, he should be intertayned with an honourable secreeye, as a poore dame of her calling might afford. Friar Onyon, seeing the geere would woorke, prosecuted his purpose then subtilly. He presently fell downe on his knees before her, and desired that, for such happye newes as he had brought, she would grant him a boone. Lysetta, liberall now to perfourme any demaund, bad him aske.

Then he began thus : Madam, quoth he, for that the Angell Gabriell is a spirite, and his brightnesse such as no mortall eye can suffer, and therefore must come unto you into some humane shape, I pray you vouchsafe that my bodie may be the receptacle for him, that, while he putteth on my carkasse, my soule may enjoy the sight and pleasures of paradice ; so shall you not hinder yourselfe, and doo me an unspeakeable benefite. Lysetta, seeing Friar Onyon was a lustye tall fellowe, willing in what she might to pleasure him, graunted his request verye willinglye : whereupon it was concluded that she should leave the doore open, and about midnight the Angel Gabriell should come to visit her. Upon this resolution home went Lysetta, as merry as a pye, tricking up her bed-chamber with all braverie and rich perfumes for the intertainment of her paramour ; and Friar Onyon, as busie as a bee, was making his winges and trinkets readye to playe the angell. Well, he delt so, that he agreed with an old pandor that dwelt opposite to the house, and there made himselfe readye, and at the houre appoynted went to Lisetta ; where he found the doore open, and so entred up till hee came to her bedchamber, where shee sat expecting his comming. Assoone as shee sawe him with his glorious winges and his white roabes, she rose, and fell at his feet ; but he lovinglye tooke her up, imbrast her, kist her, and pointed to the bed, whether the angell went after he had laid apart his abiliments, and Lisetta followed with as much speed as might be ; *cætera quis nescit ?* Early before breake of day, Gabriell tooke his leave of his Lisetta, and went to his lodging,

leaving her the proudest woman in the world, that shee was beloved of an angell.

Friar Onyon hee got him to his cell, and there tooke uppe his broken sleepe hee had lost till nine of the clocke, that hee went into his oratorye ; where he had not sitten long, but Lisetta, in as great braverie as might, came to the church, and then offered up in greater devotion a burning taper to the angell Gabriell ; afterwards, her orizens doon, she came to Friar Onion, who, after some conference, demaunded her of her newe lover, whom she highly commended ; and hee againe gave her great thanks that shee vouchsaft him to be the receptacle of so holye a saint ; for all the while his body was with her, his soule did taste the joyes of paradise.

These two thus agreed, it so fell out that sundrye times, as occasion and opportunity would give leave, the angell Gabriell viseted Lisetta. The Friar, thus frolike in this conceited content, was thwarted by fortune on this manner : Lisetta, waxing very proud with the remembrance of her newe lover, was coye and disdainfull, as she thought never a dame in Florence fit for her company ; insomuch that many wondred why she grewe so insolent. But the more they marveiled, the more shee was malapert, conceiving such abundance of selfelove within her stomack, that she was with childe till shee had uttered her minde to some of her gossips. On a day, sitting with one in whom shee had most affiance,¹ she beganne to require secreeye, and shee would unfold unto her a thing not only strange, but of great import. Her gossip, as the custome is, began to blame those wives whose secrets lay at their tongues end, and saide, shee was never toucht with any staine of her tongue ; and, therefore, whatsoever she told her should be buried underfoote and goe no further. Upon this, Lysetta began to rehearse unto her, from poynt to poynt, the whole discourse of the angell Gabriell ; how he was in love with her, and how sundry

¹ Trust.

nightes he lay with her, and many more matters which he told her of the joyes of paradise. Her gossip, being a wily wench, kept her countenance very demurely, commending the excellencye of her beauty, that did not only amaze men, but drew even angels to be inamoured of her. Promising to be as secret in this matter as her selfe, shee thought the time long till they might breake off talke; and therefore, as soone as she could finde opportunity, she tooke her leave, and hied her home-ward: but to her house she could not goe till she had met with two or three of her gossips, to whom in a great laughter she unfolded what Madam Lysetta had told her; how she was beloved of the angell Gabriell; and how sundrye nightes he lay with her, and tolde her of the joyes of paradise.

This was woorke enough for nine dayes, for the wonder of Madame Lysetta's barne went through all Florence; so that at last it came to the eares of Lisetta's freends, who, grieved that such a clamor should be rayseed of their kinswoman, knowing her folly, thought to watch neere, but they would take the angell Gabriell, and clip his winges from flying. Well, secrete they kept it, and made as though they had not heard of it, yet kept they such diligent watch, that they knew the night when the angell would descend to visit Lysetta: whereupon they beset the house round, and as soone as Friar Onyon was in, and had put off his winges, and was gone to bed, the rushing in of the watch wakened him from his rest, and that with such a vengeance, that trusting more to his feete than his feathers, he left Madam Lysetta amazed at the noise; and he himselfe was so sharply beset and so neere taken, that he was faine to leape out of a high garrett window, and so almost brake his necke, into a little narrow lane. Well, his best joint scape, but he was sore brused: yet feare made him forget his fall, that awaye he ran to a poore man's house, where he saw light, and there got in, making an excuse how he had fallen among theeves, and so desired lodging.

The man having heard talke of the angell Gabriell, knowing

very well Friar Onyon, that knewe not him, let him have lodging very willinglye, but all this while that he escapt, were Lysetta's freends seeking for the saint that so tenderly loved their kinsewoman : but they could not finde him, and to heaven he had not flowne, for they had found his wings ; sorrye they were that Gabriell had mist them ; but they chid hard, and rebuked the follye of Lysetta's selfe love, that was not onely so credulous, but such a blab as to reveale her owne secretes : it was late, and because they had mist of their purpose they departed, leaving Lisetta a sorrowfull woman, that she was so deceived by the angell Gabriell.

Well, night passed, and the morning came, and this poore man, Friar Onyon's hoast, told him that he knewe not how to shift him : for there was that day a great search for one Fryer Onyon that had escaped naked from Lysetta's house, and whoso kept him in secret should have his eares nailde on the pillory : at this the frier started and said, alas ! freend, I am the man, and if by any meanes thou canst convay me to the dortor of our friorye, I will give thee fortye duckats : if you will, quoth his hoast, followe my counsayle, fear not, I will conveye you thither safe and unknowne ; and thus, this daye there is great shewes made before the Duke of Florence and strange sights to be seene, and divers wylde men, disguised in strange attire, are brought into the market place : now I will dresse you in some strange order, and with a maske over your face, lead you amongst the rest, and when the shewe is done, carrying you as though I should carrye you home, I will conveygh you into the dortor backside secret and unknowne. Although this seemed hard to the frier, yet of two evils the least was to be chosen, and he consented to suffer what the hoast would devise. Whereupon hee that was of a pleasant conceipt used him thus : he annointed him ouer with barme mixed with honye, and stuck him full of feathers, and tying him by the necke with a chaine, put a visor on his face, and on either side tide a great ban dogge ; in this *come equipage* marched this poore man with the

friar. He was no sooner come into the open streete, but the people never having seene such a sight before in Florence, did not onely wonder at the strangenesse of his dressing, but marvelled what this novelty should meane; whereupon an infinite number, not onely of the common sorte, but of the gravest citizens, followed to see what should be the end of this wonder.

With a solemne pace marched his keeper till he came to the market place, where, tying him to a great pillar that stode there, he then let make in all places of the citie solemne proclamation, that whoso should see the angell Gabriell, should presently come to the market place, and beholde him there in that amorous dignitie that hee did vsually visit the dames of Florence. At this proclamation there was a generale concourse of people, especially of the better sort, that had heard of Lysetta's loves, so that the Duke himselfe came thither, and amongst the rest Lysetta's kinsman. When all the market place was full of people, the hoast pulled the visor from the friar's face; at which the people gave a great shoute, clapping their hands and crying, the angell Gabriell, the angell Gabriell, he that comes from heaven to make us weare hornes! I neede not, I hope, intreate you to beleve that poore Friar Onyon was heavilye perplexed, especiallye when the day grewe hotte, he naked and annointed with honye, so that all the waspes in the citie, as it were by a miracle, lefte the grocers' shops, and came to visite the friar, because his skin was so sweete, but alas to the poore man's paines, that he was almost stung to death. Divers of his convent came thither to see the strange apparition of the angell, who when they saw he was Fryar Onyon, then they covered there shaven crownes with their cooles, and went home with a flea in their eares. Thus all daye stood the poore friar, wondered at of all the people of Florence, and tormented with waspes, and at night fetcht home to the dortor by some of his brothers: he was clapt in prison, where for sorrow poore Gabriell died, and because he did so dishonor the other fryars, he bides this torment in purgatorie.

The discourse of the fryars thus past, I viewed them all that were churchmen ; and after went into a lower roome, where there was a medley of all manner of people, of all trades, sciences, and occupations, assigned to such sundrye tormentes, as man's eie would almoste surfeite with the variety of objectes, even the verye broome men were there for robbing of the broome closes between Barking and London. And hard by them was there a place, emptye, formed thus : it was made like the shape of Tiborne, three square, and al painted about with halters ; and hard by stood two tall fellowes, with carters' whips, so stearnely looking, as if with everye lashe they woulde cut a man to the bones : there was written over the place a great romain B. I could not learn for whom this torment was provided, for that so many men, so many censures : some saide it was for one Boniface, which should be pope, and should prove a great persecutor ; others, that Bonner shoulde bee brought from his place among the prelates, and be whipt there, for breeching of Bartlet Greene naked in his garden ; but the most voyces went, that it was for Bull,¹ the hangman, because at his whipping in London the carters' shewed him too much favour. Well, for whomsoever it is, God blesse me from it, for hee is like to bee well belaboured with two lustye knaves. Looking still about, I saw three men seated in thrones higher then the rest, with three sheeldes hanging by them, having impresses and mottoes ; I stayed and gazed my fill upon them ; for they had no punishment, but were as prisoners detained in purgatory, but with a prehemence ; for whichsoever of the ghosts passed by, gave them a knee with a reverence. I mervailed what they should be, and one told me it was the three degrees of cuckolds ; with that I smilde, and looked more narrowlye upon them, I spide written over the first's head this short sentence, *One and One*, over the second, *None and One*, over the third, *One and None*. This was to me a darke *Aenigma*, that I wished some Sphinx

¹ We have already had a mention of this notorious personage. See p. 25.

to unfold the secret ; at last one stept to me and tolde me the whole matter, thus :—

THE TALE OF THE THREE CUCKOLDS, OF
THEIR IMPRESSES, AND MOTTOES.

These three men, my freende, quoth the ghost, when they lived, were three famous men, and yet cuckoldes, as by their attier thou maist perceive, but different in degree, nature, and condition. He which sits highest, over whose head thou seest is written, *One and One*, had a beautifull dame to his wife, faire and well featured ; yet a great deale more full of beautye then honestye, but howsoever quallified, a good wench she was, and one that was not such a niggard but she coulde keep a corner for a freend ; to be breefe, shee would beare a man false at tables, and her husband that loved Irish well, thoughte it no ill tricke to beare a man too many : he saw it and knew very well that his wife loved another as well as himselfe ; yet he loved her so, that he would not discontent her, but suffered her to have her longing, and to feede her owne fancye, and like a wittolde, winke at it, and therefore worthye to weare the horne. Thus while he lived, the dishonor of his life was shame enough for his lewdness, and now after his death, because he was so kinde a man, they have plaste him there without any punishment, because it was penance enough to have his conscience prickt with a restlesse sting of baudrye. And heere they have made him a gentleman, and in his scutcheon have given him the ram rampant, with a mighty paire of horns hanging over his eies : to signifie, if it be rightly emblasde, that he had such a great head, that looking through his hornes he did see and not see, shocking on with heavye palms as belwether to the rest : his motto is stolne out of Tully :

Non solum pro nobis.

Meaning, that as we are not born of ourselves, but for our

country, so he did not marry a wife for himselfe, but for his neighbours ; this was the kinde opinion of this grave wittold.

The second over whose head is written, *None and One*, was a man of an honest and vertuous disposition, who having a faire wife, that though shee could not treade right, yet wrincht hir shoe inward, that was as secret as she was false ; and though she could not live *caste*, yet she lived *caute*: he never suspected her, but as he was honestly minded towards her, and kept himselfe to the wife of his bosome, so measured her foote after his owne last, and thought none in the world to have a more chaste wife, although indeed none had a more lascivious wanton. This poore man was none in his owne conceite, yet was one indeed, and therefore is he placst heere without any torture : for that is plague enough for him that he had a whore for his wife : he is likewise made a gentleman and gives armes. The goate, which by imblasure signifies, that as the goate carries his hornes behinde, so having hornes, because they were not apparent on his forehead, thought he had none, and yet carried a faire paire backward, like the goate : his motto is,

*Credo quod habes et habes.*¹

Meaning, that a man's content stands as his beleaving is : so that if a man in his own conscience thinkes he hath a faire wife, it sufficeth, whatsoever prooffe makes manifest to others.

The third over whose head is written, *One and None*, is a man that hath a woman of surpassing beautye to his wife, excellent and rare in properties, and every way as vertuous in honest perfection—a woman as faire as Helen, and as chaste as Lucrece : yet forsooth, because his wife is more faire then the common sorte, and therefore gazede on for that wheresoever shee goes, manye men's eies wait upon her, and divers lascivious youth attempt to frequent her companie : yet she that is wholly

¹ This motto is included in another tale in MS. Sloane, 1489 ; in Grange's Garden, 1577, 4to ; and in MS. Bib. Reg. 12 B., v.

resolved upon vertue hath the tortueis under her feet, and gads not abroad; but keeping home avoides all occasions of dishonor: yet for all these manifest instances of her honestye, the eye of her husband fiered with suspition, so inflames his hart with jealousie, as there is none lookes on his wife but he thinks he comes to court her, and she glances her eie on none but straight she loves him: if she smile, it is to think how her love and she shal meet; if she lower, it is because shee hath not seene him todaye: thus living dooth he lead a hellish life in the labirynth of jelousie, and therefore he is placst heere without punishment in purgatory, because there can be no greater torment then to be plagued with the restlesse sting of jelousie. He is as the rest are, made a gentleman, he armes the asse with a marvellous paire of long and large eares. The emblason, this:—that as the asse for the length of his eares thinks them to be hornes, and yet indeed they are but a plain paire of eares: so he like an asse because he hath a faire wife, thinks that *per consequens* he must be a cuckold, when indeed he is none, and so supposeth his eares to be hornes: his motto is,

Ne mulieri credas, ne mortua quidem.

Meaning, that what faire shewe soever a woman dooth beare of honestye, yet there is no credite to be given unto her coynesse: but he resolves with the crue of the yellow hosde companions, that *mulier*, howsoever it be spoken or understoode, is a woord of unconstancie:¹ therefore, though he hath no hornes, because his wife is too honest, yet like an asse, for his jealousy hee shall have a long paire of eares whiles he lives.

Thus was the order of these cuckolds discourst unto me, which as soone as I heard I went on further to spye any worth the noting, much I saw that were frivolous to rehearse, as

¹ Alluding, I think, to a tale related in MS. Sloane, 1489:—"A scholar once said to a woman who was complaining of him, Be quiet, *bona mulier!* At which, she being angry, the scholar answered, Why, *bona* is good. Well, said she, if *bona* be good, then I am sure *mulier* is not."

divers women that were hangd up by the tongues for scolding, and especiallye one Botcher's wife of Sudburye, who was so famous for that art, if wee may tearme it a science, that after her death, she was chronicled amongst the successive scholdes, her neighbours, for an archgossip in that facultye: for her husband being a poore painefull¹ man, that lived by his dayly labour, came home every night and brought her duely and duetifullye his goat, which could not content her, but she would in brave tearmes abuse him, and call him rascall, and slave, but above all, pricklowse,² which hee could not abide: wherefore having often forbad her, and seeing she would take no warning, on a day tooke hart at grasse, and belabourd her well in a cudgel: but all would not suffice; the more he beat her, the more she calde him pricklowse. Seeing stripes would not prevail, he threatned to cut out her tongue: it is no matter for that, knave, quoth she, yet shall the stump call thee pricklowse: at this answere the poore botcher was so mad, that taking a rope and tying it about her middle, having a well in his yarde, and thereunto he let her downe into the wel, and threatned to drowne her: tush! all would not prevaile, but she cried the more vehemently; wherefore he duckte over head and eares; and then when her tung could not wagge, she heaved her hands above water, and knackt with her two nailes of her thombs: then seeing nothing would prevaile but death, he drewe her up and left her to her villanye: she above the rest was tormented. A little belowe I saw a cooke that was a mad merry fellow, and he sate demurely with a cranes leg in his mouth, having no other punishment: at this I smilde, and asked the cause, and it was told me thus:—

¹ Painstaking.

² A tailor. This is a very old and very popular story. See Mr. Wright's Latin Stories, p. 12, *De muliere litigiosa*, and the note, p. 217. It is found in Poggius, and in several of the Italian collections of stories, from whence Tarlton appears to have taken it.

THE TALE OF THE COOKE, AND WHY HE SAT IN PURGATORY WITH A CRANES LEG IN HIS MOUTH.

There dwelled in Venice a gentleman called Signior Bartolo,¹ who being one of the Consiliatorie, and greatly experienced in the civill law, was much frequented of sundry sutors; amongst the rest there was a gentleman, his neighbour, that by fortune had caught some eight or ten cranes, a fowle in high esteeme in that cittie: these as a thing of great price hee bestowed on Signior Bartolo, who accepted them with great gratefulness, that so good and bountiful a gift merited. Proud forsooth of this present, he fedde them up in one of his yards, looking with great care to them, because the Venetians holde them so rare. On a day desirous to make his neighbours partakers of his dainties, he bad divers of them to supper, and commanded his cooke to provide good cheer, and amongst the rest, chargde him to kill a crane, and to see that it were excellently well rosted. The cooke, whose name was Stephano, made all thinges in a readines for supper, and when the time was convenient layde the crane to the fire. Now, syr, this Stephano was a fellowe that was somewhat amorous, and excellent at courting of a country wench, insomuch that he was the cheef gallant of al the parish for dancing of a Lincolñeshire hornepipe in the church-yard on sondaies: being thus well qualified, he was generally loved of all the girles thereabout, and especialle of one in the towne, whom he had so long dallyed withall, that the maid fell sicke, and her disease was thought to be a timpany with two heeles: wel howsoever shee was spedde, and Stephano had doone the deed. This maid hearing what a great feast should be at Signior Bartoloes house, hied her thither not onlye to see the good cheere, but that shee must feede her eye with the sight of her Stephano, who now was ruffling and sweating in

¹ This story is taken from Boccaccio, Decam. Giorn. vi., nov. 4.

the kitchen ; shee made an excuse and came in for fier, but in an unlucky time for the poore cooke, for shee no sooner sawe the crane but shee longd for a leg, and that so sore, that there was nothing but that or death ; whereupon shee calde Stephano to her, and tolde him shee must needes have a legge of the crane, for shee so deeply longde for it, that if shee had it not, it were able both to cast her away and that shee went withall. Although poore Stephano alledge many excuses, as the displeasure of his maister, and the feare of the losse of his service, yet no reason could prevaile with her who was without reason : and therefore what for love he bare her, and for dread of discredite that might ensue, if for want of her longing she should fall to travell, he ventred a joynt, and when the crane was enough cut her of a legge.

His wench thus satisfied went home : and supper time grew on, for all the gwestes were come, and presentlye, because it was somewhat late, sate downe, where they were served very bountifullye : at last the dainties of the crane forsooth, was brought up, and Signior Bartolo commaunded the carver to truncke her ; which, when hee had doone, she was set upon the table ; the gentleman of the house fell to distributing to his gwests, and at last mist a legge ; with that looking about he calde the carver, and askt him where the other leg was. Sir, quoth he, your maistership hath all the cooke sent up. Then, quoth Bartolo, go to the cooke and aske where the other leg is. The carver went down and did his maister's commaund ; the cooke, thinking to face out the matter, began to smile, why, quoth hee, we may see cranes are dainty in this country, when gentlemen cannot tel how many legs they have. Go tel my maister I sent him up as many legges as she had. The fellow brought this newes to his maister, who in a great chafe called for the cooke, and asked of him how many legs a crane had. Marry, sir, quoth he, one. Why malepert villein, quoth Bartolo, mockest thou me before all these gentlemen ? Not I, sir, quoth the cook, for I am sure I have drest many in my life,

and hetherto yet I never saw a crane have but one leg. With this answere, Bartolo was thoroughly inflamed with choller, but that he would shewe himselfe to be patient amongst his neighbours, he suppressed his anger with this milde reply : Either, gentlemen, you may thinke I or my cook is drunk, that hold a dispute about the cranes leg : but for that this night I will not be impatient, I passe it over ; but to-morrow morning, al as you are heere, I humbly request you to take so much paines as to rise betimes, and to be judge betweene me and my man, whether cranes have two legs or no : for I have nine cranes more, and wee will earlye goe into the yarde where they feede, and this shall be the wager betweene my man and me, if they have but one leg, I wil give him twenty duckats and a sute of satin : if they have two, hee shall have twentye blowes with a cudgill, and I will turne him quite out of service. With this motion the cooke seemed very well contented, that all the gwestes smilde to see poore Stephano so obstinate. Upon this matter they began to descant, and fell into pleasant chat, and so passed away the supper time. At last, although loath to depart, yet every man departed with great thanks to Signior Bartolo for their good cheer, promising verye earlye in the morning to be with him : where we leave them and againe to the cooke, who provided all his trinkets in a readines to trudge away with bag and baggage the next morning ; for he knew his matter was nought. Thus with a heavy heart he passed away the night, and in the morning fell in a slumber : but hee had not long lyen in a dreame, but Bartolo, accompanied with his neighbours, knockt at his man's chamber doore, and bad him rise, that they might end the quarrell : poore Stephano started up and with a hevy cheer, comming out of his chamber, gave his maister and the rest *bon Joure*. Come, sirra, quoth his maister, heere are the gentlemen my neighbours come to be equall censors of our controversie. Hold, take the key of the yard, and open you the door, and then let us see how many legs a crane hath. The cooke tooke the key and very easily opened the doore and

entred in ; and all the cranes, because it was so early, were at strud,¹ as their custome is generally, all stooode upon one leg and held the other under their wing. Stephano, seeing the advantage, not willing to let so faire a bal fall to the ground, began himselfe : Now, sir, quoth he, I hope yourselfe and the rest of the gentlemen will confesse I have wonne the wager : for you see heere is never a crane that hath more than one legge. At this, seeing how nimble he was to take the advantage, they all laught. Trueth, sir, quoth his maister, they stand now on one leg, but straight you shall see me make them all have two. With that Signior Bartolo, lifting up his hand, cryed, so ho ! and with that, the cranes let downe their legges, and every one stood upon two. How now, you knave, quoth his maister, how many legges hath a crane ? hath she not two ? Yes, marrye, sir, quoth he, and so would your other crane have had, if you had doone this : for if your worship, when you had seene the crane in the platter that had but one leg, had as loud as you doo now, cried, so ho ! why then shee would have had two legges as well as these.

At this jest, Signor Bartolo fel into such a laughing, and all his guests with him, that hee laught awaye choller, and admitted his man into his woonted favour. Whereupon, Stephano told them the whole discourse what happened betweene him and his wenche ; and upon this merrilye they went to breakefast. Now, syr, although this faulte was forgiven, yet, because hee dyed not in favour with the preest of the parishe, hee was appointed, for stealing the cranes leg, to stand in purgatorie with legge in his mouth for a certaine season.

After I had heard this discourse of the cooke, I went on further, to see if I could perceiue any other such jestes as might make me merrye in so mellanchollicke a place. At last, as I cast mine eye aside, I sawe where a poore vickar satte with

¹ This word is more usually applied to mares.

a coale in his mouth. I asked the reason why hee was appointed to such punishment, and it was answered me thus :—

THE TALE OF THE VICKAR OF BERGAMO, AND WHY HE
SITS WITH A COALE IN HIS MOUTH IN PURGATORY.

There dwelled sometime in Bergamo a vickar that was wel-beloved in the towne, for that he was a boone companion, and would not sticke to play at trump¹ all day with his parishioners for a pot or two of ale. A faire reader he was, and pleased the people wel; marry, for learning that was little, and tungs he had no more then were in his mouth: neither would he trouble himselfe with the knowledge of many languages, but applyed his idle time upon good felowship. It chaunced that his score growing very great, and much chalk upon the post,² his hostesse, wanting money to pay the malteman, waxed hasty with the vickar for her debt. He, being then bare of pence, because his quarterage was not come in, tolde her she could not have it as yet. Whereupon they grewe to words, and from words to blowes. For masse vickar went away with a broken head, which drived him into such a choller, that he sought all meanes how to revenge; and he laid his plot thus:

Every Sondaye morning, afore masse, all the youth of the parish did accustome to come to the ale house to eate hot puddings, which was great profit to the good-wife. Now, to prevent her of this commodity, the vickar spake against it, and forbad it openly: yet it was not so deeply inveighed against, but that diverse Sundayes they would make a steale thither to breakefast, and one Sunday amongst the rest, the whole crew being gathered together, notice was given to the vickar: whereupon he hyed him thither, and found them all hard at it by the teeth. When

¹ A game at cards, somewhat similar to the modern game of whist. See Nares, in v.

² That is, where the score was kept.

they sawe masse vickar come in, every man rose up and ranne away to shift for himselfe. The hostesse, she whipt in with the puddings ; so that there was none left in the house but Maister Vickar, who spying a doozen of lustie large black puddinges hangde in the chimney, whipt them into his wide sleeve, and went his way. He was no sooner gone, but the goodwife comming out, mist her puddings, and little suspected the vickar, but thought some of her gneests had caryed them away : wher-upon she tolde it to her husband, who let the matter passe lightly, and wisht his wife make her hastily readye, that they might go to masse. On goes she with her holiday partlet,¹ and spundging² herself up, went with her husband to church, and came just to the service. Well, Maister Vickar, who was in a great chafe, mumbled up his mattins, and, after service was doon, very stoutly got him into the pulpit, and began to fall to his collation. His text was upon the gospell for that daye, which hee courses and canvased over, that he fell at last to talke of the breakefast. Oh, neighbours, quoth hee, as I came this daye to churchward, I came into a house, nay, into an ale house, where I found a crewe at breakfast before masse, at a blouddye breakfast, a blacke breakfast ; yea, neighbours, the devils breakfast ; and with that he threwe his armes about him with such violence, that his wide sleeve untyed, the puddings fell out, and hit an olde wife on the head that she fell over againe. The hostesse, seeing a dozen of puddings that she mist, cryed out to her husband : Oh, man, quoth she, ther's the dozen of puddings that were gone out of the chimney ; hye thee least they be gone. At this there was such a laughing, and such a rumor, that the poore vickar, to leave of his collation and come downe to answeare what the alewife objected against him : but he was so wel beloved in the parish, that the alewife was punished, and her Sunday breakfasts put down by a common consent of the churchwardens.

¹ A ruff, or band.

² Dressing.

The vickar,¹ thus well revenged of the alewife, indevoured how to make amends to the parish; and, therefore, casting in his head how he might bring it to passe, one daye, as he travelled towards Pisa, he met a stranger, who had certayne feathers in his hand of a birde called *apis Indica*, which were long and large, of the colour of golde, and were so bright as scarce one could looke against them: such before were never seene in Italye. Masse Vickar, assoone as hee sawe these, had a reach in his head, and jumpt with the travailer to buy one. A price was pitcht for thirtye Julyos, and Masse Vickar paid it. Having this, home he came, and bought a case of crimsin velvet, imbrodered with golde, to put his feather in, keeping it with great curiositie and secrecie, making report that he had one of the richest reliques in the worlde, and promising upon Candlemas day next to shewe it. Wherupon it was not onely blazed abroad throughout the towne, but in all the villages and hamlets adjoining, that both old and young prepared themselves to see this holye relique. Two of the crew, who were brothers at the breakfast of puddings, hearing these news, sought how to be eaven with Maister Vickar; and therefore brought it so to passe by a wench of the house where the vickar laye, that they might see this holye relique; she brought them to the chamber and the box wherin the case lay in perfume. The fellowe looking in, and seeing a fether, neither respecting reason nor religion, tooke it out, and put it in his bosome, and fild the case full of charcoles that laye by, and so putting the case into the box, kist the wench and went his way. Service time being come, Maister Vicar runs up for the box, claps it vnder his arme, and away he goes to church; and for that it was Candlemas day, a high day, he said and sung a very solemne masse; and that being doone, seeing such a multitude of people, he got him with a great grace into the pulpit, and began his text, which, after he had rattled over a little, he told them what sundrye reliques were left to the church for the benefit of the people.

¹ This tale is taken from Boccaccio, Decam. Giorn. vi., nov. 10.

Oh, my maisters and good freends, quoth he, parishioners and neighbours, you see that every citie heer about, nay, through the whole world, hath some holy relique or other, as a blessing belonging to their corporation ; but our poore towne of Bergamo hath had none : but now God hath considered of your estate, and hath sent you a richer and more holy then all the rest. Some towne, quoth hee, hath a peece of the crosse, or of the nailes, or a peece of the sponge that recht Christ vineger ; at Rome, there is the speare that piercest his side ; at Venice, the chawbone of Saint Marke, good for the falling evill ; at Vienna, the tooth of St. Appolym, wholesome for the toothake ; at Pisa, the hoofe of Saint Loyes horse, that healeth such kinde of cattell ; for the swine, Saint Antonies bell ; for the pose, Saint Dunstones tonges ; for the squinsey, Saint Martin's trough ; for the eye sight, Saint Winifrid's girdle ; for the palsie, Saint Asaph's beades ; and a thousand more, which are now needelesse to rehearse : but, good people, I have heere for your comfort one of the feathers, yea, one of those holy and glorious feathers, that the Angell Gabriell wore when he sayde *Ave Maria* to the mother of Christ. Olde wives and aged men, kneele downe, and with joye beholde so great a miracle.

With that they all fell upon their knees, and he pulde fourth his boxe, and drewe fourth the case, which, when hee heard it rattle, he marveled ; but when he put his hand in, and founde nothing but coales, his hart was cold in his belly, and he swet for woe : yet, having a knavishe and readie wit, he sodainlye and upon the present shifted it thus : Good people, quoth he, I have mist of my boxe, and have left the wing of the Angell Gabriel behind me ; bnt I have heer a relique no lesse precious then that, which I thought not to show you before Easter day ; and these be the coales that Saint Lawrence, the holy martyr, was broilde with. And with that he drewe the charcoale out of his poake. These, parishioners, quoth he, even the very marke that is made with these, is good against all evill spirits, against blasting and witchcraft ; and, therefore, seeing it is the will of

God I should shewe you these first, I will come downe and marke you all with the holy relique of Saint Lawrence. So he stept downe out of the pulpit, and crost them all, to his great profit and their content. For which cause, in that he mockt the people, he is appointed to stand in purgatorie with a coale in his mouth.

The Vickar's tale of Bergamo being ended, I went further ; and presently I espyed a little doore, wherout issued a most fearfull noise, tempered with such far fetcht sighes and grevous shrikes, that it was a sound much to be pittied. The smalenesse of the voice discovered that they were women. Whereupon I pressed more neere the doore, and looked in at a little chinke, and there I might see a companye of beautifull women, of all ages, pitifullye tormented, as sitting in a place full of smoake and stinking savors, and bitten continually about the harts with scorpions. In all there were not above three of them, and yet they uttered as grevous laments as though there had bene a thousand. I demaunded why these were punished above the rest. They said, they were such as dyed maides, and kept their virginitye without spots, that hated men ; and for that they were so hard harted, they were adjudged to such sharpe punishment. Straight, as I cast mine eye up, I spied in a blinde corner, where a painter sat, having the picture of a roode hung aboute him, and every time he looked upon it he had three bastinados over the shoulders with a belroape. As of the rest, so I enquirde the cause of this, and it was discourst to me thus :—

THE TALE OF THE PAINTER OF DONCASTER, AND WHY IN
PURGATORY HE WAS BEATEN WITH A BEL-ROAPE.

I know you are not ignorant how, in King Edward the Sixt's dayes, all popery and superstition was banished, and the light of the gospell puld from under the bushell where it was covered, and, to the sight and comfort of all, set upon a hill, so that

all his reliques were abolished, and his idols puld downe, and the church, as neere as they could, cleansed from the dreges of such an antichrist. Wherupon, the painters that livde with such trashe, as trimming of shrines and roodes, alters and saints, and the carvers, that made such images, were faine, with Alexander, the coppersmith, to cry out against Paule and his doctrine; having so little woork, that they all most forgot their occupation. But when, for the sinnes of this land and wickednesse of the people, the Lord tooke away there good king, and deprived them of the sweet manna of the gospell, and sent them againe antichrist, with all his traditions, Queene Marye, lawfull successor in the kingdome, made proclamation that all those roodes which were pulde downe should be set up againe in every church. Amongst the rest, the church of Doncaster in Yorke-shire, desiring to be one of the formost to signifie their obedience and devotion, in all hast sent for the painter to make them a roode, and agreed upon the price. Wherupon he went about his worke; but for that his hand had beene out of use by the space of six yeeres, he had forgot the lineaments of the visage, and the other woonted proportion, that he made it very hard favorde: yet, as everye mans worke seemes well to himselfe, he went forward withall, and set it up on a Satterday at night on the roodloft. On Sunday, at masse, there was old¹ ringing of bells, and old and yong came to church to see the new roode, which was so ill favourde, that al the parish mislikt it, and the children they cryed, and were afraid of it. Upon this they fell in greate displeasure with the painter; and when Monday came, and he was with the cheefe of the parish for his money, they denyed flatly to pay him any, because his woorke was so ill wrought. He upon that cald them before the maior of the towne, who was a man who favored King Edward's religion as

¹ The word *olde* does not here signify *ancient*, as in the next line, but is merely used as a kind of superlative. It is thus employed by Shakespeare in 2 Henry iv., ii. 4.

far as he durst, and to him the painter made his complaint, that the parishioners, now that he had made their roode, would not pay him his money. The maior demaunded of them why they denide him paiment. They answered, for that he had, like a bungler, made Christ so hard favored, that it was not only unfit to stand in any church, but their children were afraid to look on it: so that everye way it should greatly hinder devotion. But yet, quoth the maior, the poore man hath doon his good wil, you must consider his hand hath been long out of use; and, therefore, there is no reason, though his cunning hath failde him, but you should pay him his monye. Well, sir, quoth they, at your request we will give him what our bargaine was; but we must buy a new rood, and cannot tell what to doo with the old. Marry, neighbours, quoth the maior, if he will not serve you for a God, follow my advice; clap a paire of hornes on his head, and I warrant you hee will prove an excellent good devill. And that, sir, quoth the painter, will I doo over and beside their bargaine. Thus were the poore parishioners of Doncaster mockt, and yet paide their monye: but their vickar so delt with bell, booke, and candle, against the poore painter, for making the ill favored roode, that he sits in purgatory beaten with a bel-roape.

The tale of the painter being ended, passing a little further, I might see where sat a crewe of men that woare baye garlands on their heads; and they were poets; amongst which was olde *Ennius*, *Virgill*, *Juvenall*, *Propertius*, and wanton *Ovid*, *Martiall*, *Horace*, and many moe, which had written lascivious verse, or other heroicall poems. But above them I marked olde *Ronsard*,¹ and he sat there with a scroule in his hand, wherein was written the description of *Cassandra*, his mistresse: and because his stile is not common, nor have I heard our English poets write in that vaine, marke it, and I will rehearse it, for I have learned it by hart.

¹ His works were published at Paris in 1578. Galland's edition was printed in 1619, fol.

RONSARD'S DESCRIPTION OF HIS MISTRIS, WHICH HE
WERES IN HIS HAND IN PURGATORY.

*Downe I sat,
I sat downe
Where Flora had bestowed her graces.
Greene it was,
It was greene,
Far passing other places ;
For art and nature did combine
With sights to witch the gasers eie.
There I sat,
I sat there,
Viewing of this pride of places.
Straight I saw,
I saw straight
The sweetest faire of all faces :
Such a face as did containe,
Heavens shine in euery vaine !
I did looke,
Looke did I,
And there I saw Apollo's wyers :
Bright they were,
They were bright ;
With them Aurora's head he tires ;
But this I wondred, how that now,
That shadowed in Cassander's bow.
Still I gazde,
I gazde still,
Spying Luna's mylke white glasse :
Commixt fine,
Fine commixt
With the morning's ruddie blase ;
This white and red their seating seekes,
Upon Cassandraes smiling cheekes.*

Two stars then,
Then two stars,
Passing sunne and moone in shine,
Appearde there,
There appearde,
And were forsooth my mistres eie :
From whence proud Cupid threw his fire,
To set a flame all men's desire.
Brests she had,
She had brests,
White like the silver dove :
Lie there did,
There did lye
Cupid overgrowne with love.
And in the vale the parts the plaine,
Picht his tent there to remaine.
This was she,
She was this,
The fairest faire that ere I see ;
I did muse,
Muse did I,
How such a creature fond could be :
A voice replied from the aire,
She alone, and none so faire !

This was Ronsard's description of his mistress ; and he is
 forest to hold it in his hand, that every time he castes his eies
 on it, he may with sighs feel a secret torment, in that hee once
 loved too much, beeing alive. A little above sat the ghost of a
 young gentlewoman that had beene false to her husband. Shee
 shoulde have beene greevously tormented, but that shee bestowed
 an annuitye for three yeeres pension upon a morrow masse prieste,
 who so laboured it with dirges, tentrals, and masses, *ad requiem*,
 that shee had no other punishment but this, that her beautifull
 haire, wherin shee so much delighted, and whose tramels was

a traine to intrappe young gentlemen, and nowe was clipt off bare to the scull; and so she sat ashamde and mourning. The cause, as I learnde, was this:—

WHY THE GENTLEWOMAN OF LYONS SAT WITH HER
HAIRE CLIPT OFF IN PURGATORY.

In the cittie of Lyons there dwelt a gentleman of good account amongst his neighbors, called Monsieur Perow. This gentleman, having land and revenues sufficient to maintaine his estate, thought fullye to heape to himselfe content, and therefore sought out a yong virgin of equall parentage to himselfe, with whom he had a sufficient dowry; and her he loved, and she likte him, and so they married, living in good estimation amongst their tenants. As they were thus linked together in wedlock, so it seemde in outward appearance that they were so strictlye tied in affection as no meanes might alienate. But women, whom nature has framde to be inconstant, cannot be altred by nurture: the palme will grow straitte, though it be never so depressed; and a wanton will be a wanton, were she married to Cupid. And so it proved by Maria, for so was the gentlewoman's name, who, because she was faire, had many sutors, that attempted to bee rivals with her husband in her love: amongst the rest, as shee resolved to choose one, there was a yong amorous youth of Lions, called Pier. He sought divers meanes to creep into her favor, past by her house, and cast up looks that pleded for pittie, and had banded him again glances that foreshewed¹ good will. Thus, with interchange of favours, they lived, Pier seeking oportunity how to reveale his minde to Maria. At last, as hee walked one day forth the towne, he saw where she was walking only with one of her maides: taking, therefore, oportunity by the forehead, he stept to her, and began to court her with sundry protestations

¹ Promised.

of his love, which had been long and so surely set as no dispaire coulde race out, promising not onely to be a faithfull servant in constancie, but to be so carefull of her honour as his owne life. And for your gravitie, think, mistres, quoth he, that faults in affections are sleight follies, that Venus hath shrines to protect her trewants, and Cupid's winges are shelters for such as venter far to content their thoughts: unseene is halfe pardoned, and love requires not chastity, but that her souldiers be chary.

Maria, hearing the wag thus play the orator, having love in her eyes and desire in hart, after a fewe faint denials, thrusting him away with her little finger and pulling him to her with the whole hand, she graunted him that fauour to be cald her servant. Graced thus, he grew in such credite, that there was no man with Maria but Pier. Having thus a love beside her husband, although hee was a faire man and well featured, yet shee found fault with him, because he was a meacocke¹ and a milkesoppe, not daring to drawe his swoorde to revenge her wrongs: wherefore shee resolved to entertaine some souldier; and so shee did; for one Signyor Lamberto, a brave gentleman, but something hard facde, sought her favour and found it, and him shee intertained for her champion.

Thus had shee a white liverd Adon to feede her eye with beautye, and a stoute Hercules to revenge all her wrongs with his sword, and a poore husband to shadowe both with his hornes.² Living thus contentedlye in her owne conceite, her husband went into the cuntrye to a farme of his, and thither with him he carried his wife, where hee passed away many merry daies

¹ A tame cowardly fellow, applied particularly, as in the present instance, to a mild husband.

² The following tale is from Boccaccio, *Giorn. vii.*, nov. 6. It is taken originally from the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Peter Alfonsi, and is found in the eastern collections of tales. It occurs likewise in Poggius, and in many of the collections of tales and facetiæ of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

in such pleasure as cuntrie sportes can affoorde. At last, serious affairs forcing him to it, he rid his way for three or foure daies to certaine of his freends there adjoyning. Maria, seeing her husband gone, thought not to let time slip, nor to lose oportunitie: and therefore the next day after sent for Pier, who hasted as fast might be, till he came to his mistres, where he had such freendlye intertainment as fitted both their humours. Shee caused her maide to make great cheere, and assoone as it was readye, to dinner they went; where they were scarce set, but one knocked at the doore; the maide looked out, and it was Signior Lamberto. She ran and told her mistres, who, fearefull that he should see Pier, or know of him, hid him under the bed, and commanded her maid to bid Signior Lamberto come up: she, like a cunning curtizan, giving him such favourable intertainment, as though hee were the man whom, above all other, shee made account off. Faith, sweete, quoth hee, I heard thy husband was from home, and so I took my nag and came gallopping hither. Set him into the stable, quoth the mistress. No, quoth Signior Lamberto, let him bee there stil and bite of the bridle; for my businesse is such, as I will onelye dine with you, and then bid you farewell. With that he set him downe to dinner; poore Pier lying close under the bed, thinking every minute an houre till he were gone. As thus they sat at their cuppes, and were wantonlye quaffing one to another, came in the maide running, and said, her maister came riding. At this, Signior Lamberto started up, and was amazed; but the gentlewoman was in a feare, that had two lovers at once in her house, and yet could have hidden them both, had it not beene for the horse that stooode tied in the court yarde. Wel, a shift must be had; and where sooner then out of a woman's head? What shall I doe? quoth Signior Lamberto. Marry, I pray you, good sweet hart, quoth she, to save your owne credit and mine, drawe your swoorde and goe downe the staires, and as you go, sweare and say that you shall finde a time and place more convenient, when you will be

revengede to the uttermost. So he did ; and by that time was the gentleman of the house come in, who marvailed to see a horse tied in the court ; and therefore alighting off, came up the staires, and, as he came, met Lamberto with his sworde drawne, and his face full of frownes, swearing, when fitter time and place would serve, he would revenge, and that with extremetye. What is the matter? quoth the maister of the house. He answered nothing, but put up his sword, took horse and away towards Lions.

As soon as the gentleman came up, he found his wife amazde, sitting in the hall in the midst of the flowre, as halfe beside herselfe. What is the matter, wife, quoth hee, that thou art so amazed, and that Signior Lamberto went downe with his swoorde drawne in such a rage? Ah, husband, quoth shee, as I sate here at my woorke, came running into the court yarde, a proper young man, having throwne away his cloake and hatte, and desired mee, as I tendered the state of a man, to save his life, for Signior Lamberto would kill him : I, pittying his case, stept in and hidde him in my bed chamber. With that came Signior Lamberto gallopping, dismounted in the court, and drawing his swoorde, came running up, and would have broken open my chamber door, but on my knees I intreated him to the contrary ; at my request hee went his way, frowning as you see, and so he is rode to Lions. The poore young man, alas, husband, lyes hid under the bed in great feare. And this tale she told so lowde, that Pier heard every woord, and therefore had his lesson what hee should answeere, smyling at the prompt witte of his mistres that had so sodaine a shift. Bidde him come out, wife, quoth he. Then she oapte the doore, and Pier he came as one greatly affrighted from under the bed.

The gentleman seeing him a proper young man and weaponlesse, had pittie on him, and saide : Hee was glad that his house was a sanctuarie for him, and greatlye commended his wife, that she had saved him from the furye of Signior Lamberto, whom all Lions accounted a most desperate man. Upon this,

taking Pier by the hand, they sat downe to dinner : and when they had taken their repast, the gentleman very curteously conducted Pier home to Lions. Now for because she was thus inconstant, shee, to qualifie her pride and insolencye, sate in purgatorye, with the punishment afore rehearsed.

This tale being ended, I looked a little further, and I might see where a young man and a young woman sate together naked from the middle upward, and a very olde man whipping of them with nettles : they, as persons that little regarded his punishment, woulde oftentimes kisse, and then the olde man as one inwardly vexed, woulde bestirre all his strength to torment them : the reason of this strange shewe was thus discourst unto mee.

THE TALE OF THE TWO LOVERS OF PISA, AND WHY THEY
WERE WHIPT IN PURGATORY WITH NETTLES.¹

In Pisa, a famous cittie of Italye, there lived a gentleman of good linage and landes, feared as well for his wealth, as honoured for his vertue, but indeed well thought on for both ; yet the better for his riches. This gentleman had one onely daughter, called Margaret, who for her beauty was liked of all, and desired of many. But neither might their sutes nor her owne prevaile about her father's resolution, who was determynd not to marrye her, but to such a man as should be able in abundance to main-
tain the excellency of her beauty. Divers yong gentlemen

¹ This tale is taken from a novel in "Le Tredecì piacevoli Notti" of Stroparola, 8vo., Vineg. 1569, vol. i., fol. 129. It has been already reprinted in Malone's Shakespeare, ed. 1821, viii. 203-210; in Collier's Shakespeare Library, vol. ii.; and in the Appendix to the First Sketch of the Merry Wives of Windsor, reprinted for this Society. Farmer considers Shakespeare to have had this in his recollection when he wrote the Merry Wives, but the similarities are by no means striking, and, as Mr. Collier justly observes, more general than particular, but a few curious coincidences of expression may be traced.

proffered large feoffments, but in vaine, a maide shee must bee still: till at last an olde doctor in the towne, that professed phisicke, became a sutor to her, who was a welcome man to her father, in that he was one of the welthiest men in all Pisa; a tall stripling he was and a proper youth, his age about foure score, his heade as white as milke, wherein for offence sake there was left never a tooth. But it is no matter, what he wanted in person he had in the purse, which the poore gentlewoman little regarded, wishing rather to tie herself to one that might fit her content, though they lived meanely, then to him with all the wealth in Italye. But shee was yong, and forest to follow her father's direction, who, upon large covenants, was content his daughter should marry with the doctor, and whether she likte him or no, the match was made up, and in short time she was married. The poore wench was bound to the stake, and had not onely an olde impotent man, but one that was so jealous, as none might enter into his house without suspition, nor shee doo any thing without blame; the least glance, the smallest countenance, any smile was a manifest instance to him that shee thought of others better then himselfe. Thus he himselfe lived in a hell, and tormented his wife in as ill perplexitie.

At last it chaunced that a young gentleman of the citie, comming by her house, and seeing her looke out at her window, noting her rare and excellent proportion, fell in love with her, and that so extreamely, as his passions had no meanes till her favour might mittigate his heart sicke discontent. The yong man that was ignorant in amorous matters, and had never beene used to courte anye gentlewoman, thought to reveale his passions to some one freend that might give him counsaile for the winning of her love, and thinking experience was the surest maister, on a daye seeing the olde doctor walkinge in the churche that was Margaret's husband, little knowing who he was, he thought this the fittest man to whom he might discover his passions, for that hee was olde and knew much, and was a

phisition that with his drugges might helpe him forward in his purposes; so that seeing the olde man walke solitary, he joinde unto him, and after a curteous salute, tolde him that he was to impart a matter of great import to him, wherein, if hee would not onely be secrete, but indeavour to pleasure him, his pains should bee every way to the full considered. You must imagine, gentleman, quoth Mutio, for so was the doctor's name, that men of our profession are no blabs, but hold their secrets in their hearts bottome, and therefore reveale what you please, it shall not onely be concealed, but cured, if either my art or counsaile may doo it. Upon this, Lyonell, so was the young gentleman called, told and discourst unto him from point to point, how he was falne in love with a gentlewoman that was married to one of his profession, discovered her dwelling and the house, and for that he was unacquainted with the woman, and a man litle experienced in love matters, he required his favour to further him with his advice. Mutio at this motion was stung to the hart, knowing it was his wife hee was fallen in love withall, yet to conceale the matter, and to experience his wive's chastity, and that if she plaide false, he might be revenged on them both, he dissembled the matter, and answered that he knewe the woman very well, and commended her highly: but saide she had a churle to her husband, and therefore he thought shee would bee the more tractable: trye her, man, quoth hee, fainte harte never wonne faire lady, and if shee will not be brought to the bent of your bowe, I will provide such a potion as shall dispatch all to your owne content: and to give you further instructions for oportunitie, knowe that her husband is fourth every after-noone from three till sixe.

Thus farre I have advised you, because I pittie your passions, as my selfe being once a lover, but now I charge thee reveale it to none whomsoever, least it doo disparage my credit to meddle in amorous matters. The yong gentleman not onely promised all carefull secrecy, but gave him hartly thanks for his good counsell, promising to meete him there the next day, and tell

him what newes. Then hee left the old man, who was almost mad for feare his wife any way should play false : he saw by experience brave men came to beseige the castle, and seeing it was in a woman's custodie, and had so weeke a governor as himselfe, he doubted it would in time be delivered up : which feare made him almost frantiecke, yet he drivde of the time in great torment, till he might heare from his rival.

Lionello he hastes him home and sutes him in his bravery,¹ and goes downe toward the house of Mutio, where he sees her at her windowe, whome he courted with a passionate looke, with such a humble salute as shee might perceive how the gentleman was affectionate. Margareta, looking earnestlye upon him, and noting the perfection of his proportion, accounted him in her eye the flower of all Pisa, thinkte herselfe fortunate if shee might have him for her freend, to supply those defaultes that she found in Mutio. Sundry times that afternoone he past by her window, and he cast not up more loving lookes, then he received gracious favours, which did so incourage him that the next daye betweene three and sixe hee went to her house, and knocking at the doore, desired to speake with the mistris of the house, who hearing by her maid's description what he was, commaunded him to come in, where she intertained him with all courtesie.

The youth that never before had given the attempt to court a ladye, began his *exordium* with a blushe ; and yet went forward so well, that hee discourst unto her howe hee loved her, and that if it might please her so to accept of his service, as of a freende ever vowde in all dutye to bee at her commaunde, the care of her honour should bee deerer to him then his life, and hee would be ready to prise her discontent with his bloud at all times. The gentlewoman was a little coye, but, before they part, they concluded that the next day at foure of the clock hee should come thither and eate a pound of cherries,

¹ That is, clothes himself finely.

which was resolved on with a *succado des labras*, and so with a loath to depart they tooke their leaves. Lionello as joyfull a man as might be, hyed him to the church to meete his olde doctor, where he found him in his olde walke: What newes, syr, quoth Mutio? how have you sped? Even as I can wishe, quoth Lionello, for I have been with my mistrisse, and have found her so tractable, that I hope to make the olde peasant, her husband, looke broad headed by a paire of browantlers. How deepe this strooke into Mutio's hart, let them imagine that can conjecture what jelousie is; insomuch that the olde doctor askte when should be the time. Mary, quoth Lionello, tomorrow, at foure of the clocke in the afternoone, and then, Maister Doctor, quoth hee, will I dub the olde squire knight of the forked order.

Thus they past on in that, till it grew late, and then Lyonello went home to his lodging and Mutio to his house, covering all his sorrowes with a merrye countenance, with full resolution to revenge them both the next day with extremitie. He past the night as patiently as he could, and the next daye, after dinner, away hee went, watching when it should bee four of the clocke. At the hour justly came Lyonello and was intertained with all curtesie; but scarce had they kist, ere the maide cryed out to her mistresse that her maister was at the doore; for he hasted, knowing that a horne was but a litle while in grafting. Margaret, at this alarum, was amazed, and yet for a shift chopt Lionello into a great driefatte¹ full of feathers, and sat her downe close to her woorke. By that came Mutio in blowing, and as though hee came to looke somewhat in haste, called for the keyes of his chambers, and looked in everye place, searching so narrowlye in everye corner of the house, that he left not the very privie unsearcht. Seeing he could not finde him, hee saide nothing, but, fayning himselfe not well at ease, staide at home; so that poor Lionello was faine to stayer in the drifatte till

¹ A basket.

the olde churle was in bed with his wife ; and then the maide let him out at a backe doore, who went home with a flea in his eare to his lodging.

Well, the next day he went againe to meete his doctor, whome hee found in his woonted walke. What newes ? quoth Mutio, how have you sped ? A poxe of the olde slave, quoth Lyonello ; I was no sooner in, and had given my mistrisse one kisse, but the jelous asse was at the doore ; the maide spied him, and cryed her maister ; so that the poore gentlewoman, for very shifte, was faine to put me in a driefatte of feathers that stooode in an olde chamber, and there I was faine to tarrie while he was in bed and a-sleepe, and then the maide let me out, and I departed. But it is no matter ; 'twas but a chaunce, and I hope to crye quittance with him ere it be long. As how ? quoth Mutio. Marry, thus, quoth Lionello : shee sent me woord by her maide this daye that upon Thursday next the olde churle suppeth with a patient of his a mile out of Pisa, and then I feare not but to quitte him for all. It is well, quoth Mutio ; fortune bee your frende. I thanke you, quoth Lionello : and so, after a little more prattle, they departed.

To bee shorte, Thursdays came, and about sixe of the clocke, fourth goes Mutio no further then a freendes house of his, from whence he might descrye who went into his house ; straight hee sawe Lionello enter in, and after goes hee, insomuche that hee was scarcelye sitten downe, before the mayde cryed out againe, my maister comes. The goodwife, that before had provided for after-claps,¹ had found out a privie place between two seelings of a plauncher,² and there she thrust Lionello, and her husband came sweting. What news, quoth shee, drives you home againe so soone, husband ? Marry, sweete wife, quoth he, a fearfull dreame that I had this night, which came to my remembrance, and that was this : me thought there was a villaine that came secretlye into my house, with a naked poinard

¹ Accidents.

² A boarding.

in his hand, and hid himselfe, but I could not finde the place ; with that mine nose bled, and I came backe ; and, by the grace of God, I will seeke every corner in the house for the quiet of my minde. Marry, I pray you doo, husband, quoth she. With that he lockt in all the doors, and began to search every chamber, every hole, every chest, every tub, the very well ; he stabd every feather bed through, and made havocke like a mad man, which made him thinke all was in vaine ; and hee began to blame his eies that thought they saw that which they did not. Upon this he rest halfe lunaticke, and all night he was very wakefull, that towards the morning he fell into a dead sleepe, and then was Lionello conveighed away.

In the morning, when Mutio wakened, hee thought how by no meanes hee should be able to take Lionello tardy : yet he laid in his head a most dangerous plot ; and that was this : Wife, quoth he, I must the next Monday ride to Vycensa, to visit an olde patient of mine : till my returne, which will be some ten dayes, I will have thee staye at our little graunge house in the country. Marry, very well content, husband, quoth she. With that he kist her, and was verye pleasant, as though he had suspected nothing, and away hee flings to the church, where he meetes Lionello. What, sir, quoth he, what news ? is your mistresse yours in possession ? No, a plague of the olde slave, quoth hee. I think he is either a witch, or els woorkes by magick ; for I can no sooner enter into the doores, but he is at my backe, and so he was againe yesternight ; for I was not warme in my seate before the maide cryed, my maister comes ; and then was the poore soule faine to conveigh me betweene two seelings of a chamber, in a fit place for the purpose, wher I laught hartely to myself too see how he sought every corner, ransackt every tub, and stabd every feather bed, but in vaine ; I was safe enough till the morning, and then, when he was fast asleepe, I lept out. Fortune frownes on you, quoth Mutio. I, but I hope, quoth Lionello, this is the last time, and now shee wil begin to smile ; for on Monday next he rides to Vicensa, and

his wife lyes at a grange house a little of the towne, and there in his absence I will revenge all forepast misfortunes. God send it be so, quoth Mutio ; and so took his leave. These two lovers longd for monday, and at last it came. Early in the morning, Mutio horst himselfe and his wife, his maide and a man, and no more, and away he rides to his grange house, wher, after he had brok his fast, he took his leave, and away towards Vicensa. He rode not far ere, by a false way, he returned into a thicket, and there, with a company of cuntry peasants, lay in an ambuscade to take the young gentleman.

In the afternoon comes Lionello galloping, and as soon as he came within sight of the house, he sent back his horse by his boy, and went easily afoot, and there, at the very entry, was entertained by Margaret, who led him up the staires, and convoid him into her bedchamber, saying he was welcome into so mean a cottage. But, quoth she, now I hope fortun shall not envy the purity of our loves. Alas ! alas ! mistris, cried the maid, heer is my maister, and 100 men with him, with bils and staves. We are betraid, quoth Lionel, and I am but a dead man. Feare not, quoth she, but follow me : and straight she carried him downe into a low parlor, where stooede an olde rotten chest full of writings : she put him into that, and covered him with olde papers and evidences, and went to the gate to meet her husband.

Why, Signor Mutio, what meanes this hurly burly ? quoth she. Vile and shameless strumpet as thou art, thou shalt know by and by, quoth he. Where is thy love ? All we have watcht him and seen him enter in. Now, quoth he, shall neither thy tub of feathers or thy seeling serve, for perish he shall with fire, or els fall into my handes. Doo thy worst, jealous foole, quoth she, I ask thee no favour. With that, in a rage, he beset the house round, and then set fire on it. Oh, in what a perplexitie was poore Lionello in that he was shut in a chest, and the fire about his cares ! and how was Margaret passionat, that knew her lover was in such danger ! Yet she

made light of the matter, and, as one in a rage, called her maid to her and said : Come on, wench, seeing thy maister, mad with jelousie, hath set the house and al my living on fire, I will be revengd on him : help me heer to lift this old chest where all his writings and deeds are ; let that burne first, and as soon I see that on fire I will walke towards my freends, for the old foole will be beggard, and I will refuse him. Mutio, that knew al his obligations and statutes lay there, puld her back, and bad two of his men carry the chest into the feeld, and see it were safe, himselfe standing by and seeing his house burnd downe sticke and stone. Then, quieted in his minde, he went home with his wife, and began to flatter her, thinking assuredly that he had burnt her paramour, causing his chest to be carried in a cart to his house in Pisa. Margaret, impatient, went to her mother's and complained to her and her brethren of the jealousie of her husband, who maintaned her it be true, and desired but a daies respite to proove it.

Wel, hee was bidden to supper the next night at her mother's, she thinking to make her daughter and him freends againe. In the meane time he to his woonted walk in the church, and there, *præter expectationem*, he found Lionello walking. Wondring at this, he straight enquires what newes. What newes, Maister Doctor, quoth he, and he fell in a great laughing ; in faith yesterday I scapt a scouring, for syrrha, I went to the grange-house, where I was appointed to come, and I was no sooner gotten up the chamber, but the magicall villeine, her husband, beset the house with bils and staves, and that he might be sure no seeling nor corner should shrowde me, he set the house on fire, and so burnt it down to the ground. Why, quoth Mutio, and how did you escape ? Alas, quoth he, wel fare a woman's wit ; she conveighed me into an old chest full of writings, which she knew her husband durst not burne, and so was I saved and brought to Pisa, and yesternight, by her maide, let home to my lodging. This, quoth he, is the pleasantest jest that ever I heard ; and upon this I have a sute to you ; I am this night

bidden forth to supper, you shall be my guest, onely I will crave so much favour, as after supper for a pleasant sporte, to make relation what successe you have had in your loves. For that I will not sticke, quoth he, and so he conveyed Lionello to his mother-in-lawe's house with him, and discovered to his wive's brethren who he was, and how at supper he would disclose the whole matter; For, quoth he, he knowes not that I am Margaret's husband. At this all the brethren bad him welcome, and so did the mother to, and Margaret, she was kept out of sight. Supper time being come they fell to their victals, and Lionello was carrowst unto by Mutio, who was very pleasant, to drawe him into a merry humor, that he might to the ful discourse the effect and fortunes of his love. Supper being ended, Mutio requested him to tel to the gentlemen what had hapned between him and his mistresse. Lionello, with a smiling countenance, began to describe his mistresse, the house and street where she dwelt, how he fell in love with her, and how he used the councill of this doctor, who in all his affaires was his secretarye. Margaret heard all this with a great feare, and when he came to the last point, she caused a cup of wine to be given him by one of her sisters, wherein was a ring that he had given Margaret. As he had told how he had escapt burning, and was ready to confirme all for a troth, the gentlewoman drunke to him, who taking the cup and seeing the ring, having a quick wit and a reaching head, spide the fetch, and perceived that all this while this was his lover's husband to whome hee had revealed these escapes; at this drinking the wine, and swallowing the ring into his mouth, he went forward.

Gentlemen, quoth he, how like you of my loves and my fortunes? Wel, quoth the gentlemen. I pray you is it true? As true, quoth he, as if I would be so simple as to reveal what I did to Margaret's husband; for know you, gentlemen, that I knew this Mutio to be her husband whom I notified to be my lover; and for that he was generally known through Pisa to be a jealous fool, therefore, with these tales I brought him into

this paradice, which indeed are follies of mine own braine ; for trust me, by the faith of a gentleman, I never spake to the woman, was never in her companie, neyther doo I know her if I see her. At this they all fell in a laughing at Mutio, who was ashambe that Lionello had so scoft him. But all was well ; they were made friends ; but the jest went so to his hart that he shortly after died, and Lionello enjoyed the ladye ; and for that they two were the death of the old man, now are they plagued in purgatory, and he whips them with nettles.

Assoone as I had passed over these two of Pisa, I looked about and saw many more, as mad and pleasant as the rest : but my time was come that I must to the judge to be censured what punishment I should have for myself for al the mad wanton tricks that I did when I was alive. Faith, and because they knew I was a boone companion, they appointed that I should sit and play jigs al day on my tabor to the ghosts without cesing, which hath brought me into such use, that I now play far better than when I was alive ; for proof thou shalt hear a hornpipe ; with that, putting his pipe to his mouth, the first stroke he struck I started, and with that I waked, and saw such concourse of people through the fields, that I knew the play was doon ; wherupon, rising up, and smiling at my dream, after supper took my pen, and as neer as I could set it down, but not halfe so plesantly as he spoke it ; but, howsoever, take it in good part, and so farewell.

FINIS.

A P P E N D I X.

No. 1.

[Extracts from "The Cobler of Canterburie," an answer to, or rather, as the title-page has it, an *invective* against "The News out of Purgatorie." The edition here used is that of 1608; only one copy of which being known to exist, I have followed the original more minutely than usual, retaining the *u* and *v* in their old-fashioned places, a method I have not adopted in the other tracts, and perhaps hardly necessary in the present instance.]

The Cobler of Canterburie. Or An inuective against Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie. A merrier Iest then a Clownes Iigge, and fitter for Gentlemens humors. Published with the cost of a Dickar of Cowhides. London, Printed by Nicholas Okes for Nathaniel Butter, and are to be sold at the signe of the pide Bull neere to Saint Austins gate. 1608. (Sm. 4to.)

The Coblers Epistle to the Gentlemen Readers.

A Hall, a Hall, Gentlemen: roome for a Cobler, here comes the quaintest Squire in all Kent; The Cobler of Canterburie, armed with his Aull, his Lingell, and his Last, presents himselfe a iudiciall Censor of other mens writings: but me thinks for my sawcinesse, I heare Apelles boy crying, *Ne Sutor ultra crepidam*. If I do see his maister mend the fault in the legge, Ile abide their frumpes, and when he hath done, Ile say, this had not been corrected but for the Cobler. Becomes not many a Tinkar a tall Pratler? and haue not men of my trade waded so deepe in the secrets of Theologie that they haue sought to correct *Magnificat*?

and then (by your leaue Gentlemē) may not the Cobler of Kent, who hath beene the patron of many good companions, and tost ouer a paire of cards at Trump¹ from morning till night, not to be admitted so far as to find fault with *Richard Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie*? Yes; and if he that writ it will not amēd the latchet, Ile on with my night-cap and my spectacles, and make him shape the legge righter ere I haue done.

I confesse tis a Booke, and so is the Colliers Iade of Croydon a horse, as well as the Courtiers Courser; yet by my faith it hath a faire Title: but if Diogenes saw it he would cry out as he did against Minda, stop your cittie that it runne not out of the gates; and inferre a like inuectiue against the Book, for that the title containes more then the whole Pamphlet: but yet in faith there is prettie stuffe in it, but vnworthie Dick Tarltons humor: somewhere too low for iests; somwhere too high for stile: if I distinguish like a scholler, Gentlemen thinke that I was borne when the Popes butterflies were abroad; and it may be some Frier was my father, and the rather I gesse it; for that nature hath wrought that vpon my crowne, that he had on his, by Art: for before I was twentie I had a bald pate. Well howsoeuer, I haue found fault, and therefore I haue attempted to amend it, not in the correcting of his worke, but in setting out one more pleasant, and more full of delightfull tales for all mens humours;² except those which are so humorous that they count nothing gracious; but that is too graue. What? a dog hath a day: *Semel in anno ridet Apollo*. Longer liues a merry man then a sad; a Cobler hath lesse cares then a King; and an houre past in honest mirth, is worth a tunne full of melancholy. Why were Tauernes inuēted, but to ripen mens wits? And why were tales deuised but to make men pleasant? Tush, when *Redde rationem* comes, I feare me there will be lesse account to be giuen for honest recreation, then either for the eniuious practises that solemne Saturnists ruminat: or for the sundrie schismes the melancholy michers³ do publish. If my principles be false, let no man

¹ See note, p. 82.

² Notwithstanding this egotistical opinion, the "News out of Purgatory" is altogether a far more amusing work, and better written than the "Cobler of Canterburie."

³ A truant one, who acts by stealth. See Nares, in v.

take exceptions, but passe them ouer with a smile: for tis but Coblers Philosophie. But I digresse, and therfore to my booke, wherein are contained the tales that were told in the Barge betweene Billingsgate and Grauesend: imitating herein *old father Chaucer*, who with the like method set out his *Canterbury Tales*; but as there must be admitted no compare betweene a cup of Darby ale, and a dish of durtie water: So Sir *Jeffery Chaucer* is so high aboue my reach, that I take *Noli alium Sapere* for a warning; and onely looke at him with honour and reuerence. Here is a gallimaufrie¹ of all sorts, the Gentlemen may finde *Salem*, to fauour their eares with iests, and Clownes plaine *Dunstable dogrell*² to make them laugh, while their leather buttens fie off. When the Farmer is set in his chaire turning (in a winters euening) the crabbe³ in the fire, here he may heare, how his sonne can read, and when he hath done, laugh while his bellie akes. The old wiues that wedded themselues to the profound histories of *Robin Hood Clim of the Clough*,⁴ and worthie Sir *Isembras*⁵ may here learne a tale to tell amongst their gosseps. Thus haue I sought to feed all mens fancies: which if I do, was it not well done of a Cobler? If I offend, and they thinke there is in it neither rime nor reason, why a Cobler did it, and there's an end.

Farewell from⁶ Shop wheresoeuer it be.

¹ A confused jumble.

² Any thing particularly unornamented, more especially language, was called *plain Dunstable*. Ray has the proverb.

³ Roasting the apple.

⁴ Ballads concerning these two outlaws will be found in Percy's *Reliques*.

⁵ An old metrical romance, printed by Copland, and reprinted from his edition in Mr. Utterson's "Select Pieces of Early Popular Poetry," 1817, vol. i., p. 77-112. A MS. copy, dated 1564, is in Douce MSS. which appears to be taken from some early printed edition, but has several variations from Copland's. There are at least three early copies of this romance of more authority than Copland's edition, in the Lincoln, Caius College, and Cottonian libraries.

⁶ The word "my" is here accidentally omitted.

Robin Good-fellovves Epistle.

A Cobler become a corrector! ho, ho, ho; it was not so when Robin-Goodfellow was a Ruffler and helpt the country wenches to grinde their mault: Then, Gentlemen, the Plough swaine medled with his teame: the Gentleman with his Hounde and his Haulke; the Artificer with his labour: and the Scholler with his booke: euery degree contented him within his limits. But now the world is growne to that passe, that Pierce Plow-man will prie into law, nay into Diuinitie, and his duncerie must needes be doctrine: tush, what of higher powers? what of Vniuersities? the text doth put downe them, Babes and Sucklings, and no more. This makes Robin Good fellow that was so merrie a spirite of the butterie, to leaue all, and keep himselfe in Purgatorie, for Hospitalitie is so cleane runne out of the countrie, that he needes not now helpe the maides to grinde their mault, for the drinke is so small, that it needs little corne: and if he should helpe them, where he was wont to finde a messe of creame for his labour, scarce get a dish of floate milke. Why, see you not how cranke¹ the Cobler is, that will forsooth correct Dick Tarltons doings, a man famous in his life for merrie conceites, and especially for a booke of my publishing?² well, Gentlemen, if you suffer it, and Dick Tarlton pocket it vp without reuenge or a drie blow at his breech, Robin Good-fellow makes a vow, to haunt him in his sleepe: and after his old merrie humor, so to play the knaue with the Cobler, that he shall repent he medled so far beyonde his latchet: but I will carie my friends these newes to Purgatory, where I know for anger, he will almost breake his taber, and will not rest till he haue reuenged: we will lay both our wits together, to put downe the paltring Cobler, and here I make a vow, either to get the conquest, or else neuer to come in your sight: and to say as I was wont: What, Himp and Hamp? here will I neuer more grinde nor stamp.

Yours in choller, *Robin*
Good-fellow.

* * * * *

¹ Sprightly.

² Perhaps the "Dialogue" mentioned in the Introduction, p. xviii.

The Description of the Smith.

This Smith was a quaint sire,
 As merrie as bird on brier.¹
 Iocund and gleesome at euery sith,²
 His countenance aye, buxome and blith,
 His face full coaly and full black,
 Hued like vnto a Colliers sacke,
 Or as if it had beene soile in the mier,
 Full of wrinkles was his cheekes with the fier
 Well he could sweat and swinke
 And one that aye loued good drinke,
 For hard by his Forge alwaies stood,
 A stond of Ale nappie and good:
 Which made the collour of his nose
 Like to the fire when it glowes:
 His heade great, his browes broad,
 Able to beare a great load,
 As no man might hold it scorne
 On his head to graft a horne.
 His coates were fit for the weather,
 His pilch made of swines leather:
 So was his breech, and before
 A dustie apron he wore:
 Wherein not to faile,
 Was many a horseshoe naile,
 And for to fit him euery tide,
 Hung an hammer by his side.
 Thus attired, the Smith gan say,
 What befell on a Sommers day.

The Smiths Tale.

Containing a pleasant iest of a iealous Cobler, and how for all his suspicion, he was cunningly made Cuckold.

In Rumney Marsh by the Sea Coast, there dwelled a Cobler; a merrie fellow, and of his middle age: who was woont, on working-daies, to chaunt

¹ A very common comparison, often found in early metrical romances, and occurs also in Shakespeare, *Mids. Night's Dream*, act v. scene 2.

² Time.

it out at his worke, and on holydaies to bestirre his stumps in the church-yard so merrily after a crowd,¹ that he was welbeloued of all the country wenches and noted for the flower of good fellowship throughout all the parish. This Cobler keeping shop for himselfe, had in house with him an old mother of his, who being as it were his seruant, desirous to liue more at ease, wisht him to take a wife: the Cobler was loth to be perswaded to mariage, and the reason was for that he feared to be a cuckold; yet at last he cast his eye on a country Lasse, that was a blithe and bonnie wench, and the chiefe of all the Maides of old Rumney: to her was this iolly Cobler a suter and after a litle wooing (as women must be got with praises and promises) the Cobler caught her, and married they must be in all haste: which done, they liued pleasantly together as fooles do presently after their wedding; but after the honnie moone was past she like a good huswife fell to her worke, to spin, and carde,² and such other deedes of huswifery as belonged to the profite of her house: the Cobler loued her well, and shee wanted nothing that might satisfie her humour, only shee was charged by her husband, not to goe abroade a gosseping with her neighbours: in so much that either on working daies, or on holy daies, when all the wiues in Rumney went to be merrie, shee was faine (as a poore prisoner) to keepe home: which although she passed ouer with silence and patience, so yet seeing his iealousie was without cause, shee vowed with herselfe if euer a friend and opportunitie serued to her minde, to make him weare the horne an inch longer then all his neighbors: but he kept her short from that, for euery day when shee was at home, she sate by him in the shop where he sung like a Nightingale, hauing his eye neuer of his wiues face, or if she sate within, her mother in law an old iealous woman bore her company; if shee went to fetch water, her mother was at her elbow; whatsoever she did, or whither soeuer shee went, to be briefe, her husband, or his mother was at one end, which grieved the yong woman: So suspicious and iealous was the Cobler that all Rumney talked of his folly: and to vex him as they passed by, would say to him; Ah neighbour good morrow now that you haue gotten a faire wife, we hope to haue you one of the brotherhode, and that the Cuckow³ in Aprill may sit and sing in your

¹ A fiddle. ² To break wool so as to make it fit for spinning.

³ A common quibble of the time. See *Mids. Night's Dream*, act iii., scene 1, Collier's Shakespeare, ii., 424.

house, as well as with your poore neighbours. I feare not that quoth the Cobler, let her do her worst, I will giue her leaue, meaning that he kept such narrow watch ouer her as he could neuer be deceiued, and therefore euery day his wife sitting by him when he was yearking of his shooes, and she at her wheele, then he would chat out this song.

The Cobler's Song.

When, as the Nobilitie pull downe their towers,
Their mansion houses and stately bowers:
And with stone and timber make Hospitalls free;
Then the Cobler of Rumney shall a Cuckold bee.

When Gentlemen leaue of their peacockly sutes,
And that all their workes are charities fruites:
Tendring the poore which needie they see,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Vsurers run vp and downe with their gold,
And giue it to them from whom it was pould:
And Colliers sacks ouer great you do see,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Westminster Hall is quite without benches,
And Southwarke Bankeside hath no prettie wenches,¹
When in Smithfield on Fridayes no iades you can see,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Maides hate marriage, and loue to liue chaste,
Virgins forsooth till fourescore be past:
And loue not that yong men their beautie should see,
Then the Cobler, &c.

¹ It was here that the Bishop of Winchester exercised his jurisdiction over the frail ones of the fair sex. The original regulations of the stews in Southward, on vellum, of the fifteenth century, are still preserved in the Bodleian Library, a fact I do not remember having been yet mentioned in the numerous notices of this notorious locality.

When wiues are not wilfull, but needes will obey,
 When silent and speechlesse they sit a whole day :
 When Gossips do meete, and no words will be,
 Then the Cobler, &c.

When womens tongues do cease for to wagge,
 And shoemakers giue not their maisters the bagge :
 When Cuckold and Keepers want hornes for their fee,
 Then the Cobler, &c.

When Tapsters and Ale-wiues from Barwick to Douer,
 Fill thirdingdeall¹ pots till the drinke run ouer ;
 When the quart is so full that no froth you can see,
 Then the Cobler, &c.

When Smiths forswear to drinke of strong ale :
 And liue without liquor whiles their nose be pale :
 When in Vintners wine no mixture you see,
 Then the Cobler, &c.

When Dutch-men hate butter, and the Spaniards pride,
 When Cardinals do want a Trull by their side :
 When the Pope like Peter humble you see,
 Then the Cobler, &c.

Every day did the Cobler vse to sing this song, and there dwelled next vnto him a Smith that was a tall and a yong lustie fellow, proper of personage, of a comely visage, curteous, gentle, and debonaire, such a one as this Coblers wife could haue wished to her Paramour, if time and opportunitie would haue faoured her fancie : and the Smith seeing what a smicker² wench the Coblers wife was, and what a iealous foole shee had to her husband, sorrowed at the good fortune of the Cobler, that he had so faire a wife, and wished that hee could finde meanes to haue such a one his friend. Upon this, beeing next neighbors, and their houses ioyning together, the Smith would oftentimes (when his leysure serued him) come

¹ A measure containing about three pints.

² Wanton.

to the Coblers shop and talke with him ; where between the Smith and the Coblers wife passed such glances, that he perceiuing there was no want, but place and opportunity to fulfill their desires. One day amongst the rest Fortune so fauoured this yong couple, that the Cobler went forth to buy leather, and left his mother and his wife in the shop: the old woman not hauing slept the last night, was heauie and fell asleepe, and the yong woman sate singing at her worke. The Smith perceiuing this, laid by his hammers and went to the stall, where he saluted his neighbour, and she returned him the like curtesie.

At last, seeing the old beldame was sure, he began to reueale vnto her how long he had loued her, and how he was sory that she was combred with such a one, as for his icalousie about all other men deserued to be made a cuckold: sundry speeches past betweene the Smith and the Coblers wife, till at last shee rose, and gaue him her hand, that shee loued him better than any man in the world, and would (if any occasion would serue) euer striue to content him. Then sweet heart, quoth he, do me but this fauour, faine to morrow some occasion to go to your mothers, and come on the further side of the way fast by such a doore, and then let me alone for opportunitie to satisfie both our desires. To this she agreede, and the Smith went to his shoppe; presently the olde woman awaked, the Cobler came home, and all was well.

At night, when they were in bed, taking him about the necke, she kist him, and told him that certaine of her friends met to morrowe at her mothers, and that shee would faine goe and see them; I pray you, good husband, quoth she, let your mother and I go together, I will not part out of her sight, neither will we make any long tariance:¹ the husband for shame could not deny this request, but granted it: whereupon the next morning she got her vp, and on with her holy day apparell, and made her as fine as fine might bee. The Cobler seeing his wife so trickt vp in her cleane linnen, beganne to bee ieaious, and called his mother aside, and charged her by that loue she bare him, not to let his wife part out of her companie till she came home againe, which she promised with an oath: so away they went, and the Cobler hee sate him downe and began to sing.

The Smith that all this day was not idle, had compounded with an olde

¹ A delay.

woman, by whose house she must passe, to fauour them with house roome, and reuealed vnto her all the matter: whose wife it was, and how he would haue his purpose brought to passe: by my troth sonne quoth she, I haue hard much talke of that ieaious cobler, and I would do my ende- uour to make the asse weare a horne; vpon this they resolued and she lik't well of his policie, and said loue had many shiftes: at last, the Smith spied his mistresse all in her brauerie, comming with her mother-in-lawe: the old wife was ready, and as she past by the doore, threw a great bowle full of bloody water right vpon her head, that all her clothes and cleane linnen was marred, being so berayed¹ that she could go no further. Alas mistresse quoth the old woman, I crye you mercie, what haue I done? full sore it was against my will: but for Gods sake come into the house, and shift you with cleane linnen: if you haue none at home I will lend you of the best that I haue: goe in daughter, quoth her old mother in law, it is a chaunce, and against a shrewde turne sometime no man may be: Ile go home as fast as I can, and go fetch you cleane linnen, the whites drie you your gowne, and make all things else ready. I pray you do, good mother, quoth she, and then away goes her mother in law: and as soone as she was out of doores, the old woman led her into an inward parlor where the Smith was: and there these two louers by this policie made the ieaious cobler weare the horne.

Whiles thus they were solacing themselues the old wife she came stumb- ling home, and for hast had like to breake her necke ouer the threshold, her fall made the cobler start: and when he saw it was his mother, and that he missed his wife, he was halfe mad, asked his mother hastily where she was: the old woman short winded, was almost out of breath, and for a good space sate puffing and blowing to fetch winde, at last shee cryed out: alas deere sonne such a chaunce as neuer was heard of, as we went through old Rumney, hard by the church, a woman threw out a bowle of bloody water right vpon your wiues heade, which hath so berayed her linnen and her gowne, that she could go no further, and so I as fast as I could came run- ning home for cleane clothes: oh for the passion of God mother quoth he, hie to her chest, and get her cloathes ready, for it may be a fetch to make the poore Cobler a Cuckold; a horne mother is soone grafted: with that the old woman got all in a readinesse, and away ran the Cobler and his

¹ Dirtied.

mother together. Well the two louers out of a little hole kept good watch and warde, that anone they spied where the Cobler and his mother came trudging: in went his wife, and sate her downe by the fire, where the cobler founde her only sitting with the old woman in her peticoate, drying her gowne: as soone as she saw him she wept: and he although he griued at the mischance, yet for that he spied her in no company, he was satisfied and wisht her to be content, and sent for a pot of beere or two to make her drinke: and after he had seene all well, and his wife in her cleane apparel setting them a little on the way; home he went againe to his shop, and his wife went to her mothers, where an houre or two she past away the time in chat, and then returned home with her mother in law. Thus the cobler was not suspicious of his wiues beeing abroad, but tooke her misfortune for a chance, and the Smith every day according to his woonted custome, would come and chatte with his neighbour the cobler, and sometimes founde opportunitie to talke with the wife, but neuer out of the shop: on a day the cobler being from home and the old woman within peeing of her hose, the Smith came to the shop, and finding her alone began to lay a plot, how to make her husband a cuckold, while he held the doore, shee promist if he would devise it, she would put it in practise, and so agreed they concluded betweene themselues, and they brought it cunningly to passe thus.

It chaunced within a fortnight after, that as the cobler and his wife lay in bed, shee fell on a great laughter, her husbande demanding the cause, she made him this answer: I will tell you husband a strange thing: so it is, that this other day, when you went to buy leather, my mother and I sate in the shop, and she fel fast asleep, your neighbour the Smith he (as his custome is) came to the windowe, and seeing my mother asleepe began to court me with faire words and large promises, and told mee, that if I would finde the meanes, that when you were out, I would let him lye with me, he would giue me fortie shillings. I shakt him off as well as I could, but he would haue no nay at all, but threw foure angels¹ into my lappe, wherevpon I tooke the golde, for me thought they were foure faire peeces, and promised him that to morrow you went fourth and my mother too, and then he should finde me alone in the chamber. Upon this hee went away, and left me the gold, and therfore if it please you, tomorrow

¹ A coin worth ten shillings.

I thinke good you should faine your selfe to go abroade and my mother too, and then hide you in a chamber hard by, and as soone as he is come in you may stand at the doore, and heare all our talke and when you heare mee consent, then breake in, and take the Smith, and swinge him well, and I warrant you husband, there will diuerse commodities rise of it: for not only we shal haue this gold, and get more for amends; but euer after be rid of such a knaue. This motion pleased the Cobler well, and the rather because the Smith profest to be his great friende, and yet would seeke to do him such disgrace: vpon this conclusion they resolved and so fell asleepe. The next day in the afternoone, the Cobler fained himselfe to go out, and his mother with him, and after comming home, at a backe doore went vp into the next chamber and hid themselues. By and by according to promise came the Smith: and went roundly vppe to the chamber where he found the coblers wife: wherefore strait shutting the doore with a boulte on the inside, hee fell to sett vppe plumes on the Coblers head-peece, the cobbler he very easily got to the doore with a great pollax in his hand, and began to listen: with that hee heard the Smith offer faire to his wife: nay (quoth she) I haue kept promise with you, for I onely promised to let you vp into my chamber: tush quoth he, this is but a caull, and many words past betweene them: the Cobler and his mother standing at the doore, with her nay, and his yea, till the Cobler had a new browe-antler growne out of his old hornes; and then she answered him, seeing nothing would content him, hee should haue his pleasure: with that the Cobler was ready to rush in, but that his mother staid him and bid him heare further: and doest thou meane good faith, quoth the Smith? yea, wherefore els (quoth the coblers wife) came we into this place: why then (quoth the Smith) heare what I will say to thee: Doest thou thinke, though we be heere in secret, that our falts will not be seene openly: that though thy husband knowes not of it and that it is kept close from the world, that there is not one aboue that sees all, and will reuenge it: yes vilde strumpet as thou art, and for this cause came I to trie thee: thou hast an honest man to thy husband, who loues thee more deerly then himselfe and works hard to suffer thee that thou shalt not want, and wilt thou in his absence wrong him: thinke if euer thou dost it, it will come out, and thou shalt be reuenged with open shame: I am thy husbands deerest friend, with whom I am dayly conuersant, and doest thou think I could find in my hart to offer him such iniury: no: and then art not thou

more to blame, that being the wife of his bosome, wilt betray thy husband, who is deerer to thee then all friends: fie vpon thee vild¹ woman, fare thee wel and amend? I will not yet tell thy husband, vnlesse I spie thee prooue light, but I shal neuer thinke well of thee while I liue and with that he opened y^e chāber doore, and the cobler chopt in, and taking the smith by y^e hand, said neighbor I thank you for your good counsell; I haue heard all y^e cōmunicatiō y^t past betweene you and my wife, and truely: and with that the Cobler wept, I am heartily glad I haue such a trustie friend to whom in my absence at any time, because my mother is an old woman, I may commit the ouersight of my wife: and truely neighbour quoth he, I pray you thinke neuer the worse of her, for she told me the whole matter, and appointed me to stand at the doore, that when you should haue offered her any discourtesie, I might haue rusht in and haue taken you: so that I perceiue you are as honest as she, and shee as honest as you, and that your meanings were both alike. I am glad of that, quoth the Smith, that you haue so vertuous a wife, I hope I haue done the part of a friend, to pleasure my neighbour: you haue done so, quoth the Cobler, and therefore ere we part, weele drinke a quārt of wine. So the Cobler bestowed good cheere on the Smith, and euer after ac-
compted him for his friend, and whensoever he went out of towne, committed the charge of his wife to the Smith, who at all times had free egress and regresse to the Coblers house without suspition.

* * * * *

The Description of the old woman.

Crooked was this beldame for age,
 Huffle shouldred and of a wrinckled visage.
 And as her backe and necke was crooked,
 So was her nose long and hooked.
 Many furrowes in her brow,
 Hairy and bristled like a sow.
 She had a large tawny face,
 And therein an ill fauoured grace.
 She was mouthed like a sparrow,
 Gated like a wheele-barrow,

¹ The very common old form of *vile*, to add one more note to twenty of Mr. Dyce's on this word.

And of a long time beforne,¹
 Not a tooth in her head had she borne;
 Yet could she chew good Ale,
 For her nose was nothing pale,
 But with swinking at her will,
 She looked red about the gill:
 Mickle² talke she had, and mickle chat,
 When with her Gosseps she sat,
 That threescore yeeres before,
 The bell for Gossiping she bore;
 Her apparrell was after the elder beere,
 Her cassocke aged some fiftie yeere;
 Gray it was and long beforne,
 The wooll from the threedes it was worne:
 A thrumbe hat she had of red,
 Like a bushell on her head.
 Her kercher hung from vnder her cap,
 With a taile like a flie flap,³
 And tyed it fast with a whim wham,⁴
 Knit vp againe with a trim tram,
 Much like an Ægyptian;
 Her sleeues blew, her traine behind,
 With siluer hookes was tucked I find,
 Her shooes broade and forked before;
 No such I saw of yore.
 This beldame on her merrie pin,
 Began her tale with this gin.

The old wiues tale.

Containing the wily sleights of a wanton wife, and how both cunningly and craftily to the safegard of her owne honestie, and her husband's discredit, she shifted her louer.

In a farre country there dwelled sometime a Gentleman of good parentage, called Signior Mizaldo, who had to his wife a very faire and beauti-

¹ Before. This is the usual old form of the word.

² Much.

³ A horse net.

⁴ An odd device. The word *trim tram* in the next line is of a similar meaning.

full Gentlewoman. And as the beastes most greedily gaze at the Panthers skin, and the birds at the Peacocks plumes: so euery faire feminine face is an adamant to draw y^e obiect of mens eyes to behold the beauties of women: experience proued it true in the wife of Mizaldo: for she beeing a woman of singular perfection and proportion, was generally looked on and liked of all, but faouered and loued especially of a young Gentleman called Peter, dealing with such secrecie, that they continually satisfied their desires without giuing Signior Mizaldo the least occasion of suspicion: and the meanes that they performed it with such secrecie was this. Euery weeke twice her husband rid from home about certaine his affaires, and she very artificially neare to the high way, that leads to the towne where Peter lay, had placed an Asses head vpon a tree, and when her husband was gone forth, she turned the head towards the towne, but when he was at home, then she alwaies had it looking to her owne house; vsing herein (as some thought) an embleame, saying when she turned the Asses head forth, that the Asse her Husband with the long-horning eares was gone from home, and when it stood towards the house, that the asse kept his chamber: but whatsoeuer in this her conceite was, Peter alwaies knew when to come, and euer when Myzaldo was from home resorted to his house. Now it chaunced that certaine boyes comming by, and seeing the Asses head stand there, threw stones at it, and hit it so often that at last they turned the asses head towards the town: which Peter walking abroad and spying thought that Mizaldo had bin gone from home and therefore at night walked towards the louers house, and comming to the doore finding it shut, according to his accustomed maner knockt, the good wife awakt: heard him and was sore afraid that her husband should heare him, and so lay still: by and by he knockt againe more lowde: Mizaldo awoke, hearing this, asked his wife who it was that rapt at the doore, or what that knocking meant? Oh husband quoth she be still it is a foule spirit that haunts this house, and yet hitherto we neuer durst reueale it, and it hath, thanks be to God, bin your good fortune neuer to heare it before. Mizaldo richer farre then he was wise, beleued his wife, and askt her if it had done any harme, no quoth she for I had learnd a charm to send it hence. Frier Rowlad learnd it me: and if it knocke againe you and I will go downe together: and I will say my charm and so we shall liue at rest: Peter that thought some other friend had bin with his leman,¹ taking it in scorn that her husband as he thought being from

¹ Lover.

home he should not bee let in, knockt again amain. With that Mizaldo and his wife arose, lighted a candle and went downe to the doore where Peter was: then she wisht her husband to kneele downe vpon his knees while she said the charme: with that she began thus.

Spirit, spirit, get thee hence,
For here is no residence:
Here thou maist not be
This night to trouble me:
For my husband and I
Safe in our beds must lie.
Therefore from hence go,
And trouble me no mo.

Now husband, quoth she, spit: and with that he spit: and Peter laught heartily and wisht hee might spitte out his teeth for being at home: This charme said she thrice ouer, and euery time made him spit, that Peter might bee assuredly perswaded that her husband was at home. Upon this Mizaldo and his wife went to bed, and heard the spirit no more: for Peter went laughing home to his lodging. Mizaldo could not sleep this night nor many nights after but stil marueling what this spirit should be, lay awake. Peter y^t once or twice thus was deceiued of the asse head, because by som cōtrary mishap it was turnd, deuised thus y^t euery night when Mizaldos wife went to bed she shold ty a string to her toe, and then leaue the end of it at the doore, so that when Peter came he might wake her, and thē if she puld y^e string again and tied it fast, her husbād was from home; if she let it slip, then he was in bed. Thus by the meanes of this string Mizaldo was oft made cuckold and sometimes whē her husbād was at home and in his sound sleep, if Peter puld the string she wold rise and go down to him to y^e doore. At last so thus this game continued, that Mizaldos wife being fast asleep and he rising to find the chamberpot stumbled vpon the string, and wondring what it ment, or to what end, groped easily, and found it tied to his wiues toe, and from thence reacht to y^e doore, he as simple as he was coniectured that this was done to make him cuckold, and therefore for that night said nothing: but against the next night had prouided a great Partizan¹ by his bed side: and when his wife

¹ A kind of weapon like a halbert.

was fast asleep he vntyed the string, and tied it to his owne toe: he had not slumbred a little, but hee felt the string pull easily, wherevpon he puld againe, and then Peter thought assuredly that he was gone from home, whereupon he knockt. Then did Mizaldo rise, put on his clothes, and tooke the partizan in his hand, and downe hee went rustling that his wife wakt, and hearing him go downe so easily, felt for the string that was at her toe, and mist it, whereupon she perceiued her husband had found out the deceit, and whipping out of the bed, ran downe the staires: with that Mizaldo opened the doore and thought to haue taken Peter, but he hauing a glance of him being in a darke night came away, and Mizaldo after him, and raised the watch, yet was Peter so light of foot that he outran thē al and escapt. Mizaldos wife fearing the worst ran vp again to her maid, and wild her to go to her bed, and lie there, and to abide whatsoever her husband should do to her, and she wold giue her a new gowne and a new peticote: the wench was content, and went to her maisters bed; scarce was she warm there, but vp came Mizaldo in a great rage, and straight laying down his partizan, fell to beating of his wife, and with a whipcord al to-lasht her body, that the blood ran down the sheets, and when he had done, in the dark groped, and found a paire of sheares and clipt of all the haire of her head, and that done opened the doore and went his way. The wench almost kild with blowes and sore pained with smart, lay stil as one in a trance: but as soon as euer Mizaldo was gone his wife arose, and shut the doore, and came to the wench, where she comforted and washt her, and anoynted her, putting on cleane linnen vpon her, and laid cleane sheets on the bed, and so sate down discontented at her work: no sooner did y^e day breake but Signior Mizaldo went with all speed to his mother in law, and there reuealed to her and to his wiues brethren, how his wife had dealt with him and how he had reuenged her: yet not sufficiently, but was fully resolued to bring her this day before the magistrate, and so absolutly to make a diuorce; the mother fell a weeping, and knowing her owne fault when she was young intreated her sonnes y^t they would make a peace and attone-ment betweene their sister and her husband, they fell to exclaime against her, and said seeing she was by her lightnes y^e discredit of her house they wold be the first and the formost in punishing such grosse offēces. Upon this they went home with Mizaldo to his house, and there comming vp the staires, they found their sister sitting very sad, the husband fround, and brethren scolded, but the mother whom nature more neerely toucht

said, what cheer daughter? what stir is this between your husband and you? what stir quoth her daughter? mary I would you and my brethrē had gon to my burying whē you went to my marriage, to wed me to a drunkard that all day goes out about whores and curtezans: and at night comes home late and perhaps not all night, as he hath done now, and so do I sit all day comfortles, and lie in the night like a widow while he is abroad with his strumpets. And quoth the mother, he is this morning come to your brethren and me, with an outcry against you, y^t this night he tooke you with a lemmon at the doore, and how he found it out by a string tied to your toe. Fie on him drunkard (quoth she) these are his dreames when he lies tiple in the tauerne: but I maruel where he hath bin to night: Mary dame said he, I fear me your flesh and your bones know too wel, for I thinke you haue not one free spot on your body, I so whipt you for your whordom, and I think y^e sheets in the bed can witnes, and the haire I cut off your head can testife. Now mother (quoth she) and good brethrē, see whether this be an arrant drunkard, or not, y^t tel these fables, saying he beate me so this night, when he toucht me not, nor before this time since yesterday, came within these doores: where he saies the sheets are bloody, see brethren, see, they are cleane: for my skin, take view of it, if it be any way toucht: and for my haire, see how faire and long it is: how hath he thē done these pranks? alas, alas, he hath falne amongst his whores in his drunkennes, and hath vsed them so, and now to the slander of me, to the dishonor of my friends, and the perpetuall infamy of our house, he hath thus (without cause) reuled me, where ye see his own lying tōg cōdemnes him. Mizaldo seeing neither his wifes hair cut nor her body any way bruised, fel into a great dump, wōdring whether he dreamt it, or no, insomuch, y^t at last he askt: why wife, was I not this night at home? At home? in faith sir no, but with some of your drabs, and I think you came home drunk. At this doubtful demand, her brethren began to take her part, and seeing what he said was false, and all her speeches probable, they rayled on him in most bitter termes, and told him, in that he had married their sister who was an honest woman, and by all meanes sought to depriue her of her good name (without cause) who shold be y^e protector of her honor they would not put it vp vnre- uenged, but would to the vttermost do to him what iniury y^e extremity of the law would afford.

Upon this, the man seing how in all things his wife had disproued him

thought assuredly that he was not at home the last night, and therefore desired her to pardon him, and he would neuer after be taken in the like offence, and so vpon that, by her mother and her brethren they were made friends, and euer after Peter and she with lesse suspition enioyed their loues.¹

* * * * *

The Sumner hauing told his tale, the people commended the great deuotion of the Abbot, wishing all iealous fooles to passe the like purgatorie. The Cobler he commended all, and said, that they were now welcome to Grauesend: euery man to his purse and lookt in it for his twopence to pay his fare: and when they had done they rose, and went into the towne to drinke: and because they went most of them to Canterburie, they went all to one Inne, wherè they began to descant and discourse of the tales that had past: I can (quoth the Cobler) remember them all, and very neere verbatim collect and gather them together: which by the Grace of God gentlemen, I meane to do, and then to set them out in a pamphlet vnder mine owne name, as an inuectiue against Tarltons newes out of Purgatorie: and then if you please to send to the Printer, I wil leaue a token that euery one of you that told a tale shall haue a booke for his labor. In the meane time, till I haue perfected it, ile lay my Coblers stoole aside, and my selfe become an Author, and I hope you shall find me so sufficient in mine english, that if I should study, you wold report, I might for my vaine, match Lilly, Greene, or any other in excellency of prose: at this they all laught, payd their shot, and went with the merie Cobler towards Canterburie.

FINIS.

No. 2.

[The following ballad affords the earliest notice of Tarlton yet discovered, and would almost seem to give some grounds for conjecturing that Tarlton at this period was well known as a writer of ballads. Mr. Collier appears inclined to think that his name may have been affixed to it merely for the purpose of increasing its sale. It was first printed by Mr. Collier in his very curious collection of Old Ballads, edited for the

¹ A tale turning on a similar deception occurs in "Westward for Smelts," 4to., Lond., 1620.

Percy Society in 1840, p. 78-84, from which work it is here taken. Mr. Collier observes there was another ballad published on the same subject, and the terrific flood has also been chronicled by Stowe.]

A very lamentable and wofull discours of the fierce fuds whiche lately flowed in Bedfordshire, in Lincolnshire, and in many other places, with the great losses of sheep and other cattel, the 5. of October, 1570.

All faithful harts come waile,
Com rent your garments gay,
Els nothing can prevaile
To turn Gods wrath away.

Of waters fierce and fel,
And fuds both huge and hie,
You may report and tel
Of places far and nye.

Of monsters very rare,
That are unseemly borne,
Whiche dooth at large declare
We live as men forlorne.

We live and linger stil,
We wander quite astray,
We want true Christians skil,
To guide us in the way.

Ful straunge unseemly sights
We may beholde and see,
What mis-deformed wights
Of women borne there bee.

Ouse bridge was lately lost,
By force of roring streame,
Which many a crowne hath cost,
In this our English realme.

Why should I make delay,
 Reciting of such acts?
 What need I more to say
 Of vice and worldly facts?

As erst I did pretend,
 So forward will I glide,
 To tell the totall end,
 What hapned at this tide.

By rushing rivers late,
 In Bedford town, no nay,
 Ful many a woful state
 May yeeld to fast and pray.

At twelve a clock at night,
 It flowde with such a hed,
 Yea, many a woful wight
 Did swim in naked bed.¹

Among the rest there was
 A woful widow sure,
 Whome God did bring to passe
 The death she did procure.

Widow Spencer by name :
 A sleep she being fast,

¹ A person undressed and in bed was formerly said to be in *naked bed*. See Nares in v. Nightgowns were not introduced before the sixteenth century, and even then most persons slept without any night linen. See a curious instance of this in Armin's Nest of Ninnies, p. 24. So also Shakespeare:—

“Who sees his true-love in her *naked bed*,
 Teaching the sheets a whiter hue than white.”

Venus and Adonis, ap. Collier, p. 385.

The flud so rashly came,
That she aloft was cast.

Which seeing started up,
Regarding small her pelf,
She left beside her bed,
And so she drownd her self.

The houses very strong,
The cattel great and small,
Were quickly laid along,
And so they perisht all.

The geldings tall and brave,
In stables rashly roules :
The churche was over flowed
In Bedford, named Poules.

The gardens round about,
The sheep in marsh or feeld,
The river was so stout
They knew not where to sheeld.

The kine and oxen, to,
Were all drowned by force,
They west not what to doo,
It had so small remorse.

O Lord, this flud was straunge,
And none occasion why ;
The weather did not chaunge,
The wind was nothing hie.

There was no store of raine,
But very little sure,
That wee should thus sustaine
The losse we did endure.

The arke of father Noy
 Was had in minde as than,
 When God did clene destroy
 Both woman, childe and man.

But that he promis made,
 When he did heer remaine,
 The world should never vade¹
 By waters force againe;

Els would we then have thought
 The dreadful day of doome
 Had been both shape and wrought
 To drown us all and some.

Upon the Saboth day
 We were amazed all;
 In church we could not pray,
 But in the judgement hall.

We were assembled there,
 With praiers most devout
 To God, with many a tere,
 To tame this river stout.

No horse nor man could passe
 Of busines small or post,
 For issue none there was,
 No way but to be lost.

In Bedford town, I knowe,
 This many score of yeeres,
 Did never rivers flowe,
 To bring us in such feares.

By chaunce I came in place,
 This great mischaunce to tel,

¹ Fade.

To end our crooked race
 What fortune late befel.

Which tale no sooner doon,
 Two men along did walke;
 Betwixt us we begon
 To raise some further talke.

What cuntrey men they were,
 I did request to knowe:
 They said of Lincoln shire,
 The certen trueth is so.

Quod they, your losse is small,
 But one hath lost her life:
 He askt what dame she was?
 I said one Spencer's wife.

In Lincoln shire (he said)
 We have sustaind great losse:
 Our stomacks are decaide,
 That late so frolick was.

Our cattel in like case
 Are drown'd and cast away;
 For oure offence in every place
 The dum beasts truly pay.

We have not scaped so:
 Both widow, man, and wife,
 Since first this flud did flowe,
 Have gained losse of life.

When that the waters ceast,¹
 As I and more doo knowe,
 Ther did from skies discend
 A great and greevous snowe.

¹ Ceased.

And so we parted then,
 Bewailing both together,
 Like poor and out cast men,
 This sudden change of wether.

Let us therefore for shame
 Let vice no more be seene,
 And eke our selves to frame,
 To serve a-right our Queen.

Finis. Qd. Richard-Tarlton.

*Imprinted at London at the long shop adjoyning unto Saint Mildreds
 Churche in the Pultrye by John Allde. 1570.*

No. 3.

[The following is extracted from a rare tract by Chettle, called "Kind-Harts Dreame," published (without date) at the close of the year 1592, or the commencement of 1593. Tarlton was then one of Chettle's "deceased friends." The apparitions of Greene, Tarlton, and others, appear to Kind-Hart in a dream, and leave with him "several bills invective against abuses raining," enjoining him to awake and publish them to the world. Kind-Hart awakes, and the appearance of the papers confirms his dream "to bee no fantisie." The following is given as Tarlton's contribution.

To all maligners of honest mirth Tarleton wisheth continuall melancholy.

Now, maisters, what say you to a merrie knave, that for this two years day hath not beene talkt of. Wil you give him leave, if he can, to make ye laugh? What all a mort?¹ no merry countenance? Nay, then, I see hypocrisie hath the upper hand, and her spirit raines in this profitable generation. Sith it is thus, Ile be a time-pleaser. Fie upon following plaies, the expence is wondrous; upon players speeches, their wordes are full of wyles; upon their gestures, that are altogether wanton.

¹ Spiritless. See the Taming of the Shrew, act iv., sc. 3.

Is it not lamentable that a man should spende his two pence¹ on them in an afternoone, heare covetousnes amongst them daily quipt at, being one of the commonest occupations in the countrey, and in lively gesture see trecherie set out, with which every man now adaies useth to intrap his brother? Byr lady,² this would be lookt into; if these be the fruites of playing, tis time the practisers were expeld.

Expeld, quoth you? that hath been pretily performd, to the no smal profit of the Bouling-allyes in Bedlam and other places, that were wont in the afternoones to be left empty by the recourse of good fellows unto that unprofitable recreation of stage-playing.

And it were not much amisse, would they joine with the dicing-houses to make sute againe for their longer restraint, though the sicknesse cease.³ Is not this well saide (my maisters) of an olde buttond cappe, that hath most part of his life liv'd upon that against which hee in-veighs? Yes, and worthily.

But I have more to say than this: is it not greate shame, that the houses of retaylers neare the townes end, should be, by their continuance impoverished? Alas! good hearts, they pay great rentes, and pittie it is but they be provided for.

While playes are usde, halfe the day is by most youthes that have libertie, spent upon them, or, at least, the greatest company drawne to the places where they frequent. If they were supprest, the flocke of young people would bee equally parted. But now the greatest trade is brought into one street. Is it not as faire a way to Myle-end by Whitechappell, as by Shorditch to Hackney? The sunne shineth as clearly in the one place as in the other; the shades are of a like pleasure; onely this is the fault, that by overmuch heat sometime they are in both places infectious.

¹ "Thames is as broade as it was ever, Poules Steeple stands in the place it did before, and twopence is the price for going in to a newe playe there."—*Cuck-Queanes and Cuckolds Errants*, p. 10. See also Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, iii., 344. In a MS. play called "The Wizard," in MS. Addit. 10306, the *twelvepenny* seat is mentioned.

² A common diminutive for *By our Lady*.

³ It is scarcely necessary to observe that the theatres were closed during a plague.

As well in this as other things there is great abuse; for in every house where the venerian virgins are resident, hospitalie is quite exiled; such fines, such taxes, such tribute,¹ such customs, as (poore soules) after seven yeares service in that unhallowed order, they are faine to leave their sutes for offerings to the olde Lenos that are shrine-keepers, and themselves (when they begin to break) are faine to seeke harbour in an hospitall; which chaunceth not (as sometime is thought) to one amongst twentie, but hardly one amongst a hundred have better ending. And therefore seeing they live so hardly, its pitie players should hinder their takings a peny.

I, marry, (saies Baudeamus, my quondam host) well, faire olde Dicke, that worde was well plac'd; for thou knowst our rentes are so unreasonable that except wee cut and shave, and poule, and prig, we must return *non est inventus* at the quarter day.

For is not this pittifull: I am a man now as other men be, and have liv'd in some shire of England, till all the country was wearie of mee. I come up to London, and fall to be some tapster, hostler, or chamberlaine in an inne.

Well, I get mee a wife; with her a little money; when we are married, seeke a house we must; no other occupation have I but to be an ale-draper;² the landlord wil have fortie pound fine, and twenty marke a yeare; I and mine must not lie in the street; he knows by honest courses I can never paye the rent. What should I say? Somewhat must be done; rent must be paid, duties discharg'd, or we undone. To bee short, what must be shall be: indeede sometimes I have my Landlordes countenance before a justice, to cast a cloake over ill-rule, or els hee might seeke such another tenant to pay his rent so truly.

Quaintly concluded (Peter Pandar); somewhat yee must bee, and a bawd³ ye will bee. I, by my troth, sir, why not I as well as my neighbors, since there's no remedy. And you, sir, find fault with plaies. Out

¹ Alluding to the severe regulations of the stews. See. p. 113.

² "So that nowe hee hath lefte brokery, and is become a draper. A draper, quoth Freeman, what draper, of woollin or linnen? No, qd he, an *ale-draper*, wherein he hath more skil then in the other."—*The Discoverie of the Knights of the Poste*, 1597.

³ A keeper of a brothel.

upon them, they spoile our trade, as you your selfe have proved. Beside, they open our crosse-biting,¹ our conny-catching, our traines, our traps, our gins, our snares, our subtilties: for no sooner have we a tricke of deceit, but they make it common, singing jigs and making jeasts of us, that everie boy can point out our houses as they passe by.

Whither now, Tarlton? this is extempore; out of time, tune and temper. It may be well said to me:

Stulte, quid hæc faris, &c.

Rusticus ipse, tuis malus es, tibi pessimus ipsi.²

Thy selfe once a player, and against players, nay, turne out the right side of thy russet coate, and lette the world know thy meaning. Why thus I meane, for now I speake in sobernes. Every thing hath in itselfe his vertue and his vice: from one selfe flower the bee and spider sucke honny and poyson. In plaies it fares as in bookes; vice cannot be reproved except it be discovered: neither is it in any play discovered, but there followes in the same an example of the punishment; now he that at a play will be delighted in the one, and not warned by the other, is like him that reads in a booke the description of sinne, and will not looke over the leafe for the reward. Mirth, in seasonable time taken, is not forbidden by the austerest sapients.

But indeede there is a time of mirth, and a time of mourning, which time having been by the magistrats wisely observed, as well for the suppressing of playes, as other pleasures, so likewise a time may come when honest recreation shall have his former libertie. And lette Tarleton intreate the yoong people of the cittie, either to abstaine altogether from playes, or at their comming thither to use themselves after a more quiet order.

In a place so civill as this cittie is esteemed, it is more than barbarously rude to see the shamefull disorder and routes that sometime in such publike meetings are used.

The beginners are neither gentlemen, nor citizens, nor any of both their servants, but some lewd mates that long for innovation; and when

¹ Cheating. See Nares in v.

² This is also quoted in Clarke's *Phruseologia*, 1697, but I do not know the original author of it. It does not look very classical.

they see advantage, that either servingmen or apprentices are most in number, they will be of either side; though indeed they are of no side, but men beside all honestie; willing to make boote of cloakes, hats, purses, or what ever they can lay holde on in a hurley burley. These are the common causers of discord in publike places. If otherwise it happen (as it seldome doth) that any quarrell be betweene man and man, it is far from manhood to make so publike a place their field to fight in: no men will doe it but cowardes that would faine be parted, or have hope to have manie partakers.

Nowe to you that maligne our moderate merriments, and thinke there is no felicitie but in excessive possession of wealth, with you I would ende in a song, yea, an extempore song on this theme, *Ne quid nimis necessarium*: but I am now hoarse, and troubled with my taber and pipe; beside, what pleasure brings musicke to the miserable? Therefore, letting songes passe, I tell them in sadnes however playes are not altogether to be commended; yet some of them do more hurt in a day than all the players (by exercizing theyr profession) in an age. Faults there are in the professors, as other men; this the greatest, that divers of them, beeing publike in everie ones eye, and talkt of in every vulgar mans mouth, see not how they are seene into, especially for their contempt, which makes them among most men most contemptible. Of them I will say no more, of the profession, so much hath Pierce Pennilesse (as I heare say) spoken, that for mee there is not any thing to speake. So, wishing the chearefull, pleasaunce endlesse; and the wilfull, sullen sorrow till they surfet; with a turne on the toe I take my leave.

Richard Tarleton.

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

Page x, line 9. His.] For "his" read "the."

Page xi, note 1. He was discharged from this office.] This statement has been generally adopted, founded probably on Bohun's anecdote at p. xxix. His will, however, proves he was a groom of the chamber at the time of his death.

Page xxxi, line 34. Uppon on Medcalfe.] There is another copy of this anecdote in MS. Ashmole, 36, 37, p. 142.

Page xxxv, line 1. The original plat.] This is the only plat remaining in Dulwich College, out of four described by Malone and Steevens. See Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, iii., 394. The three others have recently been added to the British Museum, MS. Addit. 10449.

Page 15, line 1. Why he made hornes at him.] "*Ciron: m. A hand-worme. Mais dont me vient ce ciron icy entre ces deux doigts?* But whence comes this worme betweene these two fingers? A knavish question from as knavish an action; to put the forefinger of one hand betweene the first and second finger of the other, under pretence that a worme makes the place itch, but with a purpose to *make hornes* at the partie of whom the question is asked."—*Cotgrave*.

Page 61, line 6. Blacke Sanctus.] See *Cotgrave*, in v. *Tintamarre*, and the "*Metamorphosis of Ajax*," 1596.

Page 66, note 1. Under exactly the same form.] This note was written from memory, but, on referring to Boccacio, I find the tale to be *exactly the same*, and evidently taken from it.

Page 77, note 2. From whence Tarlton.] Not Tarlton, but the author of the "*News Out of Purgatory*."

Page 109, note 5. Three early copies.] To these copies of *Isumbras* may be added another in MS. Ashmole 61, and a fragment in a MS. in the Royal Library at Naples, described in the *Reliq. Antiq.*, ii., 67. Ellis has analyzed the Caius College MS.

THE END.

F. Shoberl, Junior, Printer to his Royal Highness Prince Albert,
51, Rupert Street, Haymarket.







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